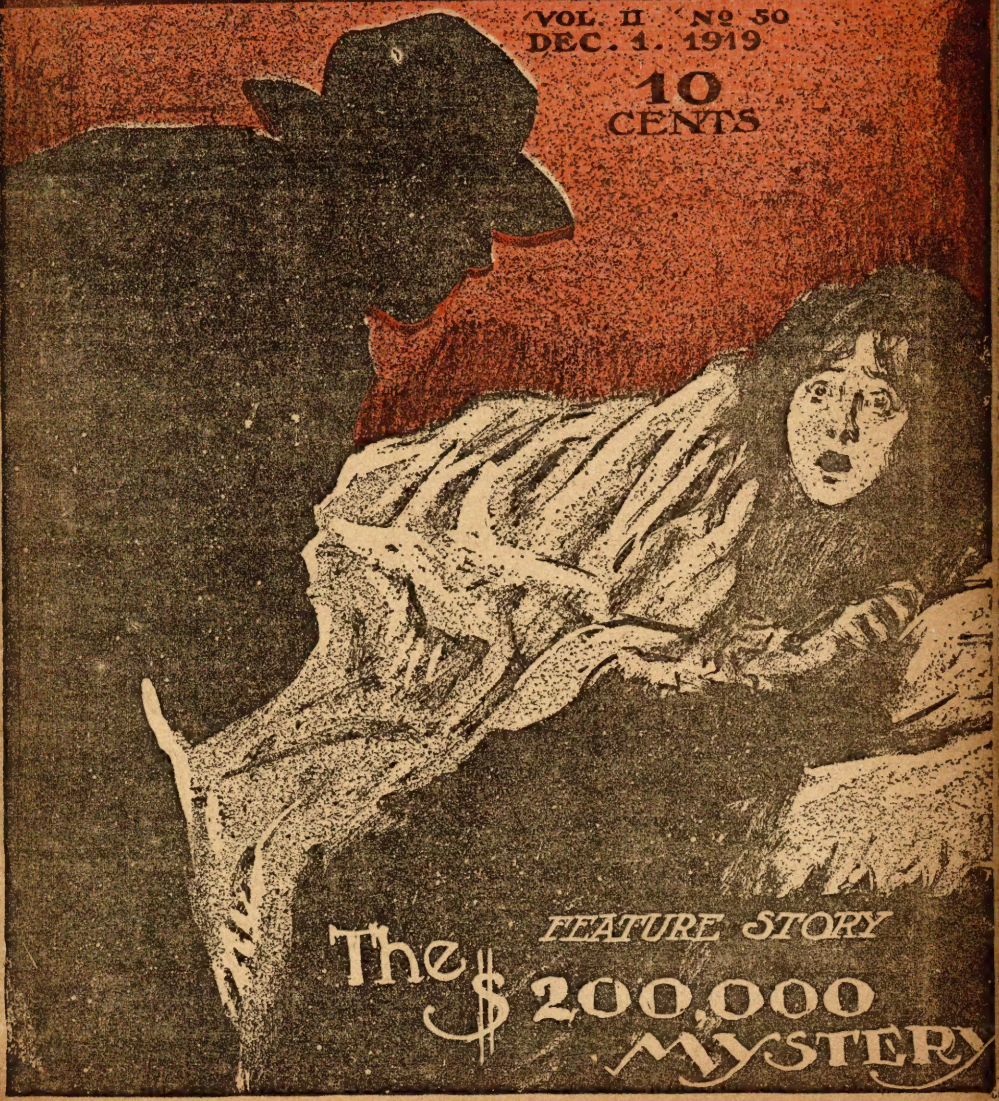
MYSTERY MAGAZINE

VOL. II No. 50
DEC. 1. 1919
10 CENTS



FEATURE STORY

The $200,000 MYSTERY

The next number will contain "THE CASE OF DOCTOR BRICE," By Mary R. P. Hatch.

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

Vol. II. DECEMBER 1, 1919. NO. 50

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Published Twice a Month by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher

249 Main Street, Buffalo, N. Y.,
Office, 168 West 23d Street, New York.

N. Hastings Wolff, Pres.
R. Byrne, Treas.
Charles E. Nylander, Sec.

LU. SENARENS, Editor

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SUBSCRIPTION PRICE:

Domestic, Single Copy	10 Cents
Domestic, Yearly	$2.50
Canada	$2.75
Foreign	$3.00

All remittances should be sent by express money order, P. O. order, check, registered letter, or draft to insure safety. We will not be responsible for money sent otherwise.

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TAKE NOTICE!

On account of the pressmen's strike in New York, we are compelled to issue this number in its present form. As soon as the difficulty is adjusted, the normal appearance of this weekly will be resumed.—The Publisher.

THE $200,000 MYSTERY

A DETECTIVE STORY.

By ETHEL ROSEMON.

CHAPTER I.

"It's an important case, especially for a young man; but in a matter of this kind I'll back the enthusiasm of youth against the experience of old age any day in the week."

"I know it's important, sir, and I'm going to land it."

"I'm sure you are. Good luck."

The chief of the Fern Detective Agency grasped the hand of his operative, Will Dayton, and gave it a hearty shake. He had taken a fatherly interest in the young fellow ever since the days when Dayton, a cub on a New York daily, had dropped into his office every morning, as he made the rounds for news. He recognized at once the quick, active mind, a mind that never skipped over a detail no matter how trival it seemed. That sort of mind is the main asset of a detective. The young reporter had a pleasing personality, too, the kind that easily wins confidence, that causes a person to talk freely, sometimes too freely. Even in those days he had called the chief's attention to some detail that had put him on the right track of a puzzling case he had been handling. When Dayton, discouraged with the slowness of his progress in the newspaper game, had expressed his desire to enter the detective field he found a ready welcome from the chief. This was his first big case and he was going to prove to his chief that his confidence in him had not been misplaced.

An hour later Bill, disguised as an emigrant, the kind he had seen in the steerage of the big liners the two weeks he had substituted for the ship news reporter, was aboard a pilot boat speeding toward Sandy Hook. The man he was searching for, the man who had recently startled England by the most daring murder and robbery in criminal annals was supposed to have escaped from the country in the steerage of this particular liner.

When the tug was within a short distance of the big ship a row boat, towing astern, was drawn close and Bill took his place at the oars and pulled in the direction of the liner. When he was opposite the steerage section he jumped from the rowboat and swam a few strokes. He was just about to call "help," when he had

planned would bring about his rescue as a steerage passenger who had fallen overboard, and his subsequent restoration to his place among his fellow travelers, when something fell over the side of the steamer and landed in the water a few feet away. A few strong strokes took him to the spot just as the something rose to the surface. One patch of ghastly whiteness against the surrounding darkness revealed the fact that it was a woman. The stillness of the figure, the absence of any struggle indicated unconsciousness or death. Bill put one arm around the limp form and with the other struck out for the row boat, which had drifted several yards away. It was hard pulling against the tide but Bill was a tireless swimmer. He soon reached it, shoved his burden over the side and then quickly climbed aboard.

"What a pity," he exclaimed as he pushed back the masses of dark hair and looked into the face of a very young woman.

He rubbed her wrists vigorously but there were no signs of returning life. Then he remembered the small flask the captain of the pilot tug had put in the bottom of the boat, "just for safety and luck." He forced some of the liquor between the girl's clenched teeth. In a few seconds the eyelids fluttered, then slowly opened. The girl gave a short frightened gasp for breath.

"Take a good drink of this," Bill commanded, holding the flask to her lips.

A slight quiver of repulsion ran through the girl's body at the odor of the liquor, but she obeyed unquestioningly.

"Where am I?" she asked in bewilderment.

"In the bottom of a row boat near Sandy Hook," Bill answered lightly.

"But how—how did I get here?" she asked again.

"You fell over the side of the ocean liner. I happened to be out for a row, saw you coming my way and picked you up. Can you remember how you fell overboard."

"I didn't fall," the girl answered in a startled tone as memory came back to her. "I was standing at the railing of the boat trying to make out the coast when a man came behind and grabbed me. I saw a small knife raised above my breast and that's all I know. I guess I must have fainted from fright."

"Then you're wounded?" Bill asked quickly.

"I can't tell," the girl answered, putting her hand to her breast.

By the light of an electric flash which Bill took from his pocket he discovered a rent in the girl's waist just above her heart. There was no stain of blood, but then the water might have washed it away. He put his hand to the rent and felt something hard.

"What's that?" he asked.

"That's a gold locket I've worn since I was a baby,"

"Well, it saved your life. The knife struck it."

Bill had gone out in search of one mystery and had found another. The first was forgotten in the presence of the second, the living one. It wouldn't do to try to board the liner now. He might subject this girl to new dangers. He decided to row to the nearest Jersey town and wire his chief to send some one else on the job, his job, the big job, but somehow or other he didn't regret its loss as much as he thought he would.

"Lie quietly in the bottom of the boat and see if you can sleep," he told the girl as he covered her with the coat he had discarded before he jumped into the water. "We have a long row and you must keep as warm as you can."

Dawn was just tinting the sky when Bill saw the outline of Keansburg a short distance ahead. The girl had fallen into an exhausted doze. Bill woke her gently.

"We're going to land soon and seek shelter in the nearest house on the shore," he told her. "It will be better not to arouse suspicion by telling a story that has any element of mystery about it. For the present we must pose as brother and sister. You are feeling ill, leaned too far over the side of the steamer and fell overboard. I jumped in to save you. We were rescued by a pilot boat. The captain gave us a row boat to get to shore. And now that we're brother and sister it might be well for us to have some names to call each other by. Mine's Will Dayton, Bill to my sister, of course."

"Mine's Katherine Terrill."

The occupants of the nearest cottage were already at breakfast when Bill led his charge up to the door.

"Can you let us have shelter here for a few hours?" he asked the woman who answered his knock. She looked suspiciously at the two forlorn figures.

"I will pay well for accommodations" Bill hastened to add. "I'm afraid my sister will be ill if she does not have some warm food and a change of clothing at once."

The money offer shrieked loudly in the woman's ear and she showed the strange pair into the living room.

"My husband says it will be all right," she assured them when she returned a few minutes later from a whispered consultation in the back room. "I'll have some hot broth ready for your sister in a few minutes and then she can lie down in the room upstairs while I dry and press her clothes."

They were ravenously hungry. Bill wondered if the good old dish of ham and eggs didn't sound better to the girl than the promised cup of broth. The man of the house was just finishing his second cup of coffee when the two entered the dining room. He read the sign in Bill's eyes as they rested on the large empty platter, a platter that had recently been honored by a generous supply of sausage and griddle cakes.

"Bring in some regular food, ma," he said, looking contemptuously at the two cups of steaming broth. "That's all right for a starter, but water only gets up an appetite."

Bill resolved that if he ever became captain of the detective force he'd offer that man a job. His companion nibbled daintily at the food but she seemed nervous and ill at ease.

"I think my sister would like to lie down now, if you will be kind enough to show her to a room and give her some dry clothes," he said finally.

The young girl gave him a grateful look as she followed Mrs. Hardy, their new hostess, from the room.

CHAPTER II.

It was noon when Mrs. Hardy brought word to Bill that his sister was dressed, and would like to talk to

him. While she was resting he had gone into town and phoned to his chief.

"Sorry this had to happen just now," the chief told him, "but the ship is still at Sandy Hook and I'll send another man on the case until you can get back to town."

When Bill entered the upstairs bedroom he was surprised at the change a few hours' rest had made in the girl. Some of the frightened look had left her eyes and a faint color had begun to come into her cheeks. For the first time he noticed that she was wearing a peasant's costume. He hadn't given a thought to her station in life, but the tones of her voice, her whole bearing had stamped her distinctly upon his subconscious mind as one who had been carefully reared and protected. Now the proud lift of her head, her manner of receiving a guest in her room, was in striking contrast to the humble clothes she was wearing. She smiled gratefully at Bill as he sat down beside her.

"Recovered fully from your little scare of last night," he asked.

"Almost—thanks to you," she replied. "And now I want to ask your advice about my future actions. You see, I am indeed a stranger in a strange land. To my knowledge I have no relative living except perhaps my father's cousin's widow, who up to a year ago was living in New York."

"Before we talk of the future, let us try to clear up some of the mysterious happenings of the past," Bill reminded her. "Have you no curiosity about the man who attempted to murder you last night and the reason for the attack?"

"Just now my only desire is never to come within that man's power again. He could have had but one motive, robbery."

Unconsciously Bill's eye traveled over the cheap clothes the girl was wearing. She read his thought.

"This is a disguise," she laughed. "It served two purposes. In the first place, as I had to travel alone I thought it might save me from disagreeable attention, and in the second place, well, you see I am a sort of an amateur novelist. The heroine of my new book travels to America in the steerage and I was getting local color. Of course, I wasn't counting upon the color's being quite so vivid."

"Perhaps, if I tell you my profession and my reason for being on hand just in the nick of time last night, you will realize that you need not withhold any of the details of your story, in fact, that by speaking quite frankly you will be able to help us both," Bill suggested. "Just listen to this," he went on, and he explained what he had been doing.

"And now," he concluded when he had told her of the "big case" he had just started to work on the previous night, "we're going to devote all our time to catching the man who tried to stab you. But first I want you to tell me something of your life on the other side."

The chapters she had lived so far has been uneventful, she told Bill. Her father, Donald Terrill, had married an English girl and taken her to his home in Ireland. When their only child was thirteen years old the mother had died and the father, in order to give his daughter greater advantages, had moved to London where he engaged in the brokerage business. He soon became one of the most successful men in his line, and upon his death a year ago, had left his daughter in possession of a large fortune, the greater part of which was in United States bonds and railway stock.

"And you had the bonds with you," Bill interrupted.

"Yes, in my baggage."

"And they were worth?"

"About two hundred thousand dollars."

No wonder some hardened criminal had taken a desperate chance in the hope of obtaining such a fortune, Bill thought. He realized that he was dealing with a "big case," as big as the one to which his chief had assigned him, and he had simply fallen into it, or rather that it had been almost thrown into his arms. Besides it was his own case, and he was anxious to get at it.

"Can you describe the man who attempted to stab you?" he inquired.

"No. It was dark when he attacked me. He came up in back of me and all I saw was his hand and the shining knife."

"But can you describe any of your fellow passengers?" he asked casually.

"Yes, there was one who did not seem any more accustomed to his clothes and his surroundings than I was. He looked like a man in the thirties, was a little below medium height, had light hair and mustache and was in all a good looking man."

"Did he seem attracted to you?"

"Not at all. He never once tried to speak to me as several of the other young men did, but I noticed him looking at me intently several times."

Bill felt that he had obtained the description he wanted. The man had kept a close watch upon Miss Terrill's movements, and his face had stamped itself so vividly upon her subconscious mind that it was the first she had described even though he had never attempted to speak to her.

"Now the first thing for me to do is to get into the city and stop the payment of your checks and drafts at the bank," he told her. "The thieves will, of course, turn them into currency and endeavor to slip away before there is any possibility of the facts becoming known."

That night he went to New York.

As soon as the bank was open the next morning Bill presented himself at the office of the president.

"Why, those drafts were cashed yesterday," the latter told him.

"By whom?"

"By the young lady, Miss Katherine Terrill, herself. I remember the incident clearly, because she was introduced and vouched for by Strafford Vance, who has been a business and personal friend of mine for the past twenty-five years."

"And Miss Terrill was known to Mr. Vance personally?"

"Her father was his London broker, and on his many visits to England he was a guest at their home."

"Well, here's just another mystery I'll have to clear up."

"You can do it, if any one can, I hope," the banker assured him as he took his leave.

Mr. Vance, when visited at his office in Wall Street declared that there could be no mistake about his identification.

"I knew the young lady and her father well," he said. "In fact I was their guest in London only a few weeks before Mr. Terrill passed away. Any one else in this country who claims to be Katherine Terrill must be an impostor, and I am willing to help you prove it, young man, for the sake of my old friend."

For the first time a faint suspicion began to creep into Bill's mind. Mr. Vance he knew to be a man of very high standing in the financial world. His integrity had never been questioned. He could have no possible object in identifying an impostor as Katherine Terrill, daughter of his old friend. On the other hand what did he, Bill Dayton, know of this strange girl he had taken from the water? Masses of black hair, clear gray eyes, dazzling white skin do not constitute a certificate of honesty. If all good women were beautiful, all bad women ugly, the vamp could never corner her victim. To Will's mind the matter was solved. He had but to turn his captive over to headquarters, the easiest part of the detective's job. But somehow he didn't feel elated. On the contrary his spirits dropped lower and lower all the way to the New Jersey town.

He started the tramp from the boat landing to Mrs. Hardy's cottage with bent head, lost in thought. Dayton had taken a short cut along the shore, but he was in no hurry to get to his journey's end, for he had been watching, almost unseeing, for almost a quarter of an hour, a track distinctly outlined in the wet sand. Suddenly it dawned upon him that those footsteps might have some bearing on the case in hand. He stooped to examine them. Sure enough, they were made by a heavy shoe similar in outline to the peasant footgear worn by the girl who was now filling all his thoughts. He retraced his steps, following the track in the sand. In a few minutes he stopped short, his attention focused on a slender girlish figure a short distance away. The girl stood for an instant looking out toward the sea, then turned quickly and was lost from sight around a bend in the shore. The detective sprang forward just in time to see her plunge into the water. In a second he had jumped in and pulled her back.

"Well, it seems to be in the day's work for me to save you from the ocean," he said. "Did you think you'd try to finish the little job started by your stiletto friend on shipboard?"

"I just realized that I did not have the courage to face poverty alone in this strange country," she answered tremulously.

"Not a very courageous way of taking the world."

"I promise I'll not attempt it again," she assured him with a wan smile. "Now that I've been rescued twice it seems that I was really meant to live to a ripe old age."

Bill admired the boldness with which she met the situation. She had the calm innocence that might have been utilized in a worthier cause, he thought, in the detective business, for instance.

"Come," he said, taking her arm, "we must hurry back to the house before you take a chill in your wet clothes."

"Oh, I can easily explain that this accident occurred from your ignorance of the coast," he assured her. "Or better still, since neither of us has left anything of value there, we can suddenly disappear and go to some house in a nearby town."

"Oh, but I have left something of value," the girl demurred. "That is," she added hastily in response to Will's questioning look, "I left a paper with Mr. Hardy and I would like to get it."

"I'll go back to the house and get it for you and then come back here to meet you."

"Thank you, but I'd rather go after it myself," she insisted.

As they neared the cottage Bill caught sight of Mr. Hardy going out at the back door. He hastily averted his glance and was intently studying the sea line when the girl gave him a quick, sharp look.

"I'll go in the back way and up to my room and you can go in the front entrance," she said, as she hurried away from him.

Through the kitchen window Bill saw Mrs. Hardy hand the letter over to the girl, who slipped it into the pocket of her dress.

"The sudden fright has affected my sister's mind," Bill explained to Mrs. Hardy when she joined him in the living room a few minutes later. "I rescued her from an attempted suicide not a half hour ago."

"Insane?" Mrs. Hardy queried. "Well, I was beginning to think something was queer around here. I hope you'll take her away before she does any harm."

"I will," Bill promised, much to the woman's relief.

CHAPTER III.

After supper that evening Bill suggested a walk along the beach.

"Be sure you don't come back dripping wet," Mrs. Hardy warned significantly.

"We won't," laughed Katherine, "for after this I'll watch my step."

Bill glanced at her quickly, surprised at the readiness with which she was acquiring American slang. But then, he argued, it takes an alert mind to be crooked successfully.

When they were alone on the beach he led her to discuss her favorite books, and then in the midst of a friendly argument, he asked suddenly:

"Now, tell me what your name is."

"Why, I told you before, Katherine Terrill," she answered.

"But I mean your real name," he insisted.

"Why, that's my real name," she said wonderingly.

"You might as well confess now," he told her. "The real Katherine Terrill has already reached New York and has been identified at the bank by a New York broker who knew both her and her father in London. The standing of this man in the business world leaves no doubt as to the genuineness of the identification."

"But I don't care how many have been identified as Katherine Terrill," the girl insisted, "or who identified them. There will be some way of proving the truth of my claim, even if there is no way of getting my fortune back."

He had hinted to Mrs. Hardy that the girl was insane. Now the thought entered his mind that he had inadvertently struck the truth of the matter. Detective records cite many cases in which minds suddenly deranged through shock confuse their personalities with that of another. The idea brought a certain relief to Bill. There were certain alienists in New York who had effected wonderful cures. He would consult one

he first thing the next morning. That feeling, something stronger than the detective's trained mind, had old him that the girl did not belong to that criminal lass in which his reasoning powers were attempting o place her. Next time he would use better judgment, e determined.

He was very tender and considerate the remainder f the evening. She noticed his change of attitude and vondered.

"He is regretting his suspicions of me," she concluded finally.

That night Bill forced himself to stay awake until very sound of life in the house was quieted. He then tole softly upstairs to the door of the girl's room. He listened at the keyhole. Her regular breathing told him that she was sleeping soundly. He opened the door gently and stole over to her bed. Taking the cork from a small phial he held in his hand he saturated a handkerchief with the contents and passed it back and forth a couple of times under the girl's nose. Then with the aid of his pocketflask he located her dress on a chair near the bed and took the letter from its pocket. Down in his own room he held the envelope to the light and saw to his surprise that it was addressed to him. Carefully opening it he drew forth a neatly written paper, a will leaving all her property should it be recovered to William Dayton who had so unselfishly interested himself in her behalf. Her second attempt at suicide had been genuine then, not stage play, with the knowledge that he was on hand to save her as he had been tempted to believe. When he returned the letter to the pocket of her dress the girl was still sleeping heavily as the result of the drug.

The next morning Bill compensated Mrs. Hardy generously for the care of his sister and himself, and the two started on the trip to New York. As soon as they got beyond hearing of the house, Bill began to again question the girl carefully about her fellow passengers on the trip from England.

"Did you notice any girl who at all resembled you?" he asked.

"Yes, there was one who seemed to me to bear a striking resemblance. Her hair and eyes were the color of mine and she was of about the same figure, though I judge she was older, say about thirty-five."

"And you remember all the gowns you had in your trunk?"

"Of course I do," she laughed. "What woman ever forgets a gown?"

Then he outlined his plan of action. He would disguise her as an elderly woman—which he did at once by covering her black hair with a gray wig he had brought with him on his trip from New York, and lining her face with a makeup pencil—and then they would both go to the banker to get from him if possible a detailed description of the woman and what she was wearing. The girl would then be able to tell him if the woman who was impersonating her had made use of the gowns in her trunk.

To each it was a great adventure. To this girl it meant clearing her name and regaining her fortune, though the latter was not the purpose predominant in her mind to the man it was the proving of his ability as a detective and the reinstating of this strangely interesting girl in his confidence.

The banker received the couple with an ill-concealed irritability. He wished they wouldn't bother him any more with the case. Strafford Vance had vouched for the girl. That was sufficient. Besides, if by some unforeseen chance there was a slipup somewhere, his bank would be the loser. He greeted Bill with:

"Still trying to ferret out a mystery, I see."

He gazed curiously at the detective's companion as Dayton mumbled an introduction.

"Some eccentric old aunt from the country who wants to go back and tell the folks she has seen a real live city bank president," he thought to himself.

"I have just obtained a description of the lady for whom you cashed the drafts, and I want to find out if your picture corresponds with that of my informant," the detective began.

"Well, since you still insist upon doubting the lady's identity, let us hear what news your informant gives you," the banker retorted.

Dayton took a notebook from his pocket and read: "Hair, light; eyes, blue; age, thirty or thereabouts; short, inclined toward plumpness."

The banker leaned back in his chair, smiling blandly.

"Can you tell me where you obtained your information?" he asked.

"I cannot reveal the name of the party," the detective explained, "but I can tell you that it comes from a pretty reliable source."

"The source may be straight, but the information is rather crooked," he said with a self-satisfied chuckle. "Miss Terrill has dark hair, deep gray eyes, is not more than twenty years of age, tall and slender."

The banker had fallen into the detective's trap. In order to prove how wide from the mark the other informant was he had given a complete and accurate description of the woman who had been introduced at the bank by Strafford Vance.

"Even though my first attempt hasn't seemed successful I may yet be able to prove that both you and your friend have been deceived by a scheming adventuress," he said.

"I'm afraid that will be beyond even your powers," the banker returned confidently.

"I wonder if you can describe the gown the young woman was wearing when she called at your office," the detective continued.

"I can, and to please you, will," the banker answered, getting good natured, and giving a full description of the costume worn by his caller. Now that he knew the bank was safe, he felt it would do no harm to humor the young man. In the business world one can never tell when one may need to ask a favor of a representative of a detective agency.

"And you can produce the young lady, I suppose?" Bill inquired casually, while he was noting down the description of her gown.

"Well, I hope to be able to do so in a few days," the banker promised as the couple took their leave.

"Did you recognize the gown?" Dayton asked his companion as soon as they left the bank.

"Oh, yes, it's one I had made just before I left London."

"Can you have it duplicated?"

"Easily. Fortunately it is a plain color, of a material the English fashion books announce is quite the vogue here this season."

A seamstress whom Dayton had often employed in

similar cases was soon busily at work in the modest little apartment he had taken for Miss Terrill, making the gown under the girl's orders.

Meanwhile Dayton made another visit to Strafford Vance.

"There are still a few facts about Miss Terrill the office is endeavoring to clear up, Mr. Vance," he said.

"As I told you before, I am at your disposal in any matter that will lift suspicion from my old friend's daughter," the broker answered pleasantly.

"Have you heard from her since the day you accompanied her to the bank?"

"No."

"Don't you think that strange?"

"Not at all. She was not settled at that time and promised to let me know her address as soon as she found a comfortable place as she wished my advice about investing some of her fortune."

The next morning the broker received a note written in a delicate feminine hand.

"Dear Mr. Vance:—

"If convenient will you kindly call at my apartment in the St. John Hotel this evening. I am anxious to consult you about the immediate investment of some of my money.

"With best wishes,

"Sincerely,

"KATHERINE TERRILL."

Mr. Vance smiled to himself as he returned the letter to the envelope and requested his secretary to enter the appointment in his engagement book. Surely this would settle the doubts in the mind of even a story book detective.

CHAPTER IV.

When Mr. Vance was announced at the Hotel St. John promptly at eight o'clock that evening, he was immediately shown up to the apartment of Miss Terrill who, he was informed, was expecting him. The greeting between the two was cordial. They passed a few minutes in polite pleasantries and then Mr. Vance referred to the visits of the detective.

"You know, my dear, absurd as it may seem, there has been some question as to your identity," he began.

"To my identity" the girl asked in surprise.

"Yes. Evidently some impostor has been going around passing herself off as Katherine Terrill, of London, England. The circumstance seems to worry a certain rising young detective who has probably allowed himself to become charmed by this adventuress."

"But surely such an assertion upon the part of anyone can in no way hurt me?" she questioned.

"Not materially, my dear," the broker assured her, "but it may cause you a little unpleasantness which it would be better to avoid."

"But your identification should be sufficient," the girl said. "My father often told me how highly you are esteemed in the business world both here and abroad. Your testimony under oath before a court of law should settle the matter once and for all. You would be willing to give such testimony, would you not?"

"Most assuredly. I was not thinking of myself, only of the annoyance to you."

"It would have been more than annoying, though if the other young woman had reached the bank in advance and had cashed my drafts."

"That could never have happened because she would have been compelled to be identified by some one of good standing in the financial world and surely such a person——"

Just then the door opened and Bill Dayton entered the room.

"You here?" Mr. Vance exclaimed in surprise.

"In the flesh as well as the spirit," Bill laughed.

"Oh, I see," the broker continued in a relieved tone, "You are in the employ of my young friend and are trying to trace the impostor. You are really the first woman I have met who could keep a secret, young lady. Your surprise when I mentioned the fact that some one was impersonating you was quite genuine. You are not planning to take our American stage by storm, are you? By the way, Mr. Dayton, have you any news of the other Miss Terrill?"

"We are on her track and getting warmer all the time," the detective assured him. "And I remember your promise to help us."

"Yes, and that promise is doubly renewed, now that I know that you are in the employ of my young friend here."

"Then you will make an affidavit that this young lady is Miss Katherine Terrill, daughter of your old friend, Donald Terrill, a broker of London, England?"

"Most assuredly I will."

A notary was immediately summoned and an affidavit properly drawn up.

"Now that settles the matter. There can be no more doubt."

"You identified the lady who cashed the drafts, Mr. Vance?" the girl asked.

"Why, you know I did," the broker smiled. "What made you ask that question?"

"Because I am not that lady."

"You—you are not the lady?" Mr. Vance gasped in astonishment.

"No," the girl repeated. "I am Katherine Terrill whom you met on your visits to my father's house in London, but I am not the one you vouched for at the bank."

"Is it possible that two people, not twins, can bear such a striking resemblance. Why, the two of you could not be told apart."

"Not by a casual observer, perhaps," the detective interrupted, "but if you will look more closely I am sure you will note some difference between Miss Terrill and the woman whom you identified."

"Now that you have called my attention to it, I believe that she was several years older than Miss Terrill. As I look back upon my conversation with her I remember a few remarks that, had I been at all on my guard, might possibly have aroused my suspicion. She avoided as much as possible all reference to her father, saying that her grief was too recent to speak of him. She alluded to the death of Mr. Terrill's brother in the United States, and when I mentioned the fact that my old friend had always spoken of his relative in America as his cousin she excused the slip by claiming that she had called him 'Uncle' since she was a child. And now,

my dear," the broker concluded, "since you have already met with such a poor sort of reception in this country of ours I shall feel very much easier about you if you become one of my family circle, at least until matters are cleared up. Mrs. Vance has often heard me speak of you and your father and when I told her of my meeting with the supposed Miss Terrill she took me to task for not inviting her to be a guest at our house. The fact is I did give her an invitation, but she hastily pleaded other arrangements, and I did not press the matter."

Dayton added his approval of Miss Terrill's accepting the broker's invitation and the next morning his charge was safely installed in the Vance household.

CHAPTER V.

And now Bill Dayton admitted that for once he was completely stumped. There was not a single clue he could work on. He might hang around New York for days, weeks, even months, and never come across the woman who looked enough like Miss Terrill to impersonate her, or her partner, the man whose only description was that of the emigrant furnished by his client. He was beginning to grow discouraged, to despair of ever solving the mystery which meant so much to his reputation as a detective, to his peace of mind as a man. Then New York was startled by another crime that gave the papers an excuse for scareheads, the ambitious journalists a chance to prove their mettle. Immediately following the disappearance from home of a wealthy society girl, the body of a beautiful young woman had been found in the river. Before the family of the missing girl had had an opportunity to view the recovered body, the afternoon editions of the leading dailies had brought in a verdict of suicide, and had even started rumors of the causes which had led the young debutante to take her life. The stories were sprinkled with the due amount of "It is alleged," "It is reported," "It is understood," and the owners of the papers were safe, the minds of the curious were pleasantly thrilled and only members of the missing girl's family were disturbed.

"Why, that might have been Katherine if——" Dayton murmured to himself as he read the newspaper accounts.

If the idea that under different circumstances it might have been Miss Terrill struck him, there was reason to believe that some one else, knowing nothing of his rescue of the English girl, might have the same thought. He read the newspaper eagerly. The second editions retracted all that the first ones had printed. The father of the society girl had looked at the body in the morgue and declared that it was not his daughter. Then who was it? Dayton knew who it might have been so ——

Detectives, whose business it is to make a life study of the tendencies and the habits of criminals, have found that the victims and scenes of their crimes have a strong fascination for the perpetrators. At times terror is stronger than this fascination, but Bill thought he recognized the character of Miss Terrill's assailant well enough to be able to gamble on his reaction to his crime. Still in the disguise of an emigrant he took up his position in the morgue to await developments.

One by one they strolled in during the hours of the day, the silent mourners who had loved ones among the missing. The first gasp of horror at their surroundings was in most cases followed by a sigh of relief when they failed to identify the one they sought. None stopped for a backward glance as he hastened out into the open. In all faces sorrow was mingled with terror, a trembling awe of the Great Presence in its ghastly form, but in none was the terror, the fear that Bill sought.

It was closing time.

"I'll be here when you open up," Bill told the keeper as he started to the door.

Then he changed his mind and drew back. Some one was coming into the room, some one who had evidently waited until the last minute in the hope that the place would be empty. He wished to be shown the body of the young woman that had been discovered yesterday morning, he told the keeper, giving the description contained in the papers and unconsciously supplementing it with the details uppermost in his own mind, the features of Katherine Terrill. From his place of concealment Dayton watched him approach the body, hesitate a second and then as if by a great effort of will force his eyes to look at it.

"It isn't she," he told the attendant, and as he turned to pass through the door the detective saw the terror for which he had been watching all day. He made a sign to the guard and followed closely in the man's steps.

When a woman desires to blot out a disturbing vision she does it with tears, a man with drink—that is he includes a bartender or two in his circle of intimates. The man the detective was following did so. He hurried uptown to a cafe of questionable character, secured a table in one corner and began to order drinks. Bill, who was known to the bartender as a queer sort of chap who never seemed to have much to do but was always well supplied with money, hung around the bar until every table except the corner one was filled. He then walked casually up and took his place beside the man whom he had followed from the morgue. The stranger didn't seem to welcome company. He gazed up at Bill with an irritated frown. Without paying any attention to his companion Bill gave his order.

"This joint doesn't know that Prohibition has struck the burg," Dayton ventured after he had consumed enough liquor to presumably loosen his tongue.

His companion gave him a surly grunt in reply.

"You're from Scotland, I see," the detective ventured.

"Well, there's something wrong with your sight then," the man mumbled.

"Oh, I have it. You're from Ireland," Bill continued good naturedly.

"Before you travel all over the globe and spoil any more drinks for me, I'll tell you I'm from right where I am now," the man said, hoping to discourage further conversation on the part of his companion.

"That so?" Dayton queried in surprise. "Then you must be his brother."

"Whose brother?" the man asked, his curiosity getting the better of him.

"Why, a fellow who came over on the ship with me

from England. Just landed a week ago. Sorry you're not the man. It means a loss of money to me."

"Owe you money?"

"Well, not exactly."

"Come on, have a drink on me," the stranger invited.

At first Bill refused and then after sufficient urging reluctantly consented.

"Now, how do you lose money because I am not the man who came over in the ship with you?" the stranger asked when he considered his companion was hazy enough to forget caution.

"He's a thief and maybe—now I don't say for sure—but he might be a murderer."

The man, who had told Bill his name was Clark, started back, and then controlled himself.

"How did you find that out?" he asked, trying to make his tone appear casual.

"Well, I'll tell you, partner," Dayton continued, looking at his companion with a drunken leer. "Some strange things happened on that ship. There was a girl—gee, she was some girl—she left England, but she never reached New York. Great pity, I'll say."

"Did she die on the way over?" Clark asked, not attempting to hide his interest.

"No, sir, she was thrown overboard at Sandy Hook. Niee girl, too. Katherine Terrill. I worked in her father's office in London long time ago. Yes, sir, thrown into the cold water at Sandy Hook. Funny, partner, you look just like the man who threw her over."

A look of terror spread over Clark's face. His companion was leaning back in his chair in a half-drunken stupor. He wouldn't notice anything.

"How do you know she was thrown overboard?"

"How do I know? How do I know?" the detective repeated stupidly. "Come on now, have a little steam on me."

The man nodded and they were served.

"Too bad, she had lots of money," Bill mumbled over the glass of booze, apparently unmindful of his companion.

"If she had lots of money why did she travel in the steerage?"

"Oh, did I say she was in the steerage?" Bill asked, looking up at his companion through half-closed eyes that quickly noted Clark's realization of the break he had made. "Well, maybe she was, maybe she was. And to think of all the money and bonds she had. I know, because I worked in her father's office."

"But you haven't told me how you're losing money because I'm not the man you thought."

Then Bill related a scheme of finding out the murderer and getting a reward for his work.

"That's a good idea" Clark approved, "and I think perhaps I can help you."

"How can you help me? Go fifty-fifty if you do. But how can you do it? Tell me that."

"Can't tell you here," Clark answered, looking around cautiously, "but you come down to my house and spend the night, and we'll lay out the whole plan."

Bill consented eagerly. His companion paid for the last round of drinks and the two left the cafe, arm in arm. The detective reeled along and leaned heavily on Clark's arm.

"Come, we'll get into a taxi. Save time," the latter finally suggested as he hailed a passing cab.

"Great idea, great idea, partner," the detective mumbled as he stumbled into his seat.

The number Clark gave the driver was in the lower part of the city in the poorest tenement district. The cab finally drew up before the house and as Clark stopped to pay the fare Bill gave a hasty glance around that took in all the details of his surroundings. When his companion turned to him he was again the reeling fellow who had left the cafe. With one foot on the first step he paused.

"Guess I won't go with you tonight, partner," he said. "Not to-night. The missus and the kid'll be waiting up for me."

"Well, come in and have another drink anyway," Clark suggested.

"Can't, partner. Don't feel quite right in the head. See you again."

Clark tried every means of persuasion but he couldn't change the detective's determination to go home to the wife and kiddies.

"See you at ten o'clock tomorrow morning," he said, waved a farewell at Clark and went reeling down the steps.

The strange man hurried up the steps, stood for a few minutes in the shadow of the shabby doorway and then cautiously retraced his steps, keeping his eye fixed on the unsteady form in front of him. Block after block he followed, but the fellow always avoided the dark corners, the corners where force might be used with impunity. They were steadily getting further and further uptown, and still the man kept on his reeling way. Presently they were nearing the theater district. Brightly lighted doorways were sending streams of people into the streets. Taxis were dodging in and out in one continuous line. The man in front had ceased to reel, though his gait was still unsteady. A limousine turned the corner. The man stepped in front of it. The machine passed on, and the man was lost in the crowd.

CHAPTER SIX.

About ten o'clock the next morning Bill, dressed as a man-about-town, entered the saloon opposite the house into which Clark had invited him the previous night. It was well worth watching, that house, the detective decided, for there, he was sure, would be enacted some of the important scenes in the drama which held his whole attention at this particular moment. It must be the stronghold of Clark and his confederates or else why had he been so anxious to inveigle his companion there from their table in the cafe? It would be well, he figured, to get a look at the inmates of the house, anyway. In Dayton's line of work the wider the acquaintance the better.

The detective had not waited long when he saw a woman descend the steps. She was heavily veiled but from the gown she was wearing—the one the banker had described to him—he realized he was on the track of Katherine Terrill's impersonator. At the corner she boarded a street car and the detective took his place on the rear platform where he could keep her well in view. In general build she resembled Miss Terrill, but he could see nothing of her face, for not once during the

twenty minutes' ride did she raise her heavy veil. His keen eye soon noted mannerisms unlike those of his client, a folding of the thumb in the palm of the right hand, a nervous tapping of the foot.

At Forty-fifth street the woman alighted, walking rapidly west past the Astor, and made her way toward Eighth Avenue. Near the corner she gave a sharp, unexpected turn and went quickly up the stoop of one of the brownstone fronts. From the corner of his eye, the detective, as he passed, saw her turn the key in the latch. He made a mental note of the number of the house, of the sign, "Furnished Rooms," in one window, "Vacancies" in the other. He returned to his apartment, changed his clothes in case his loud attire had attracted the lady's attention, packed a suit case, and was soon interviewing the landlady of this particular house concerning single rooms. As they talked Dayton noticed two men, a pianist and a violinist, playing in the other room.

"My house is filled with musicians," the landlady explained as her gaze followed his. "We are like one big family. The same boys return to me year after year when they are not on the road. You see when I was a performer——"

The detective interrupted the woman's reminiscences by taking up his suitcase. He had once or twice had occasion to become intimately acquainted with this particular variety that houses "talent" in the middle Forties and he had no desire to renew former experiences unless compelled to do so in the interest of his profession.

In a few minutes she had unpacked his suitcase and descended again to the large old fashioned parlor—perhaps the only one in the neighborhood that wasn't let out to a vaudeville team—which formed a meeting place for the musically inclined. To select a house like this for a home, even a temporary one, indicated a leaning towards things musical. It was one avenue of approach which Bill realized he must use to advantage. Together with his keen logical mind, he possessed a love of music which his friends declared was the one incongruous trait in his character.

"A criminal with a $50,000 price on his head could slip right through Bill's fingers, if he could sing or play well enough to meet with his approval," they said.

He was a first class musician himself and had once thought seriously of turning his talent into a profession.

"The trouble is, though," he laughed, "I have become so accustomed to eating that I'm afraid I would never make a very successful artist."

The two musicians had gone to their rooms soon after Bill's arrival, and he now had parlor and piano to himself. He ran his fingers lightly over the keys and soon became lost in the Faust Aria, so completely lost that he forgot for the time being his reason for being an inmate of this particular house. In a few minutes he heard a slight noise back of him, the rustle of a woman's garments accompanied by a faint, sweet tantalizing odor. Without moving from his position, he raised his eyes slightly and caught the full reflection of the newcomer in the glass in front of him. The lady who had kept her face so completely hidden during the entire journey uptown now stood with no shield between them, the artist paramount in her being.

"You have a wonderful sympathy with your theme," she said almost to herself as the last strain died away.

"It is my favorite," he said simply, and then released from the spell of those strains his mind turned to her as his quarry, not as his fellow artist. For the sake of the former he talked to her in terms of the latter. Her love for music was the one good thing about her, and in the strange workings of fate, it was now becoming a potent factor in her undoing. At the end of a friendly little chat, he volunteered his name as Harry Arnold who had come from the West to make connections in the musical world in a managerial capacity.

"I am Miss Katherine Terrill," she said in answer to his introduction.

The name slipped glibly from her lips, as if they had known no other. To her a change of name was of no more consequence than a change of gloves. The old was probably forgotten as soon as the new was assumed. After a few more casual remarks she excused herself, and went upstairs. Dayton strolled out into the hall, consulted his watch, and then followed her, reaching the top of the stairs just in time to see her enter the room opposite his. Such a favorable coincidence, he told himself, was proof positive that nature had predestined him for just the career he was following. He had armed himself with crackers and fruit, for now that he was under the same roof with his prize, he had no intention of letting a simple thing like a table d'hote dinner—no matter how simple—stand in the way of his capture. With one ear keeping guard over the sounds of the hall without, he spent the remainder of the afternoon smoking and reading.

About six-thirty he heard the door opposite open and close, and a key turn in the lock. As the outer door slammed, he stood at the window, hat in hand. His neighbor was descending the stoop, her heavy blue veil drooping to her shoulders. She carried nothing but a small purse and a pair of gloves. Evidently she was merely going out to dinner. There was no need to follow. As Dayton watched he saw her go down the few steps that led to the French restaurant in the basement of the house two doors below. It was safe to take a short nap in preparation for the hours of wakefulness that might possbily be his share for the night. Sounds from the musically inclined on the floor below formed a more or less pleasant accompaniment to his dreams. As he dozed off he found himself considering the labor it would necessitate to extract the discord from those sounds and blend them into the perfect harmony of a heavenly choir.

CHAPTER VII.

When Bill awoke the discords and harmonies had died away, the reflection of a Broadway sign that endeavored to convince the public by its brightness that its favorite chorus girl of yesterday had become the popular screen star of today, shone across his bed and the house was still except for an occasional closing of a door or the passing of unmusical feet. The detective's first thought was the room across the hall. He went to his door and looked through the keyhole. From the tiny streak of light under the door he could tell that his acquaintance of the afternoon was still astir. He had hoped that she had the habit of retiring early. He

was eager to put his plans into operation. For an hour the streak of light sent its warning across the dusty hall carpet and then it suddenly went out. Dayton arranged himself comfortably to read for a couple of hours until there was a likelihood of his neighbor's being in the first slumber.

Landladies in the Forties learned to conserve light many years before such conservation became a war measure. This habit of burning a tiny gas jet in a musty hall fitted perfectly with the detective's scheme. It lent just enough light for him to distinguish the lock on the opposite door, but not enough to reveal his features to a chance passerby. With a few deft twists Dayton removed the lock, pushed the door back quietly and stepped into the room at the same moment drawing a small mask down over his face.

The light from the partially raised shade fell across the woman's bed, subtracting the years and accentuating her resemblance to the real Miss Terrill. Dayton drew back for an instant as if he had stepped unawares into a sacred place. In that instant the woman's eyes opened and gazed into the barrel of the pistol which the intruder had ready for just such an emergency.

"What are you doing in here?" the woman asked with the calmness of one who had lived many times through a similar situation.

"Keep quiet and you will soon find out," the intruder answered.

"Leave this room immediately or I will cry for help," the woman threatened.

"Oh, no, you won't," Dayton told her with a slight movement of the pistol.

She gave a gesture of contempt.

"I give you one minute to be out of this room and house," she said.

"Listen to me; if you make the slightest outcry I will expose you."

A slight stiffening of the woman's body told the detective that his remark had struck home.

"Clark and his gang are not here to protect you now."

The woman was too much of a crook to waste precious moments by asking how he knew her. She changed her tactics.

"Surely there is honor even among thieves," she said. "It can't be that you will rob one of your own profession."

"I'd rob the devil himself," he answered, "if he had jewelry and bonds that I wanted particularly."

The woman's hand moved quickly under her pillow but, before she could pull it out again Dayton pushed her back in the bed, and just as she was about to scream he clapped a saturated handkerchief to her mouth and nostrils. The scream was cut short in a long breath which gave her the full benefit of the chloroform.

Bill did not know what kind of trick locks he might have to force open. There was a possibility of his having to remain in that room for hours and he was taking no chances. He drew from his pocket a gag which he adjusted to the woman's mouth, and then tightly tied her hands and feet. He was ready to begin work unhampered. He went hastily through the drawers of the dresser, tumbled dainty lingerie and silk hosiery in a heap but found no bill, paper or anything else of value. He next turned his attention to the large wardrobe trunk which stood in one corner of the room. "Katherine Terrill, London, England," it was marked. The locks had been adjusted to put a stumbling block in the path of the curious and it was a short time before even Bill's skilled hands could manipulate them. A small safe was built in the trunk and this was filled with bills. Dayton transferred them from the safe to his pocket and then pulled out the hat compartment in it he found an iron box. This was what he had come for and he was now ready to leave. He turned in the doorway to give a look at the woman on the bed. The effects of the drug had not yet worn off. He started back with the intention of removing the gag from her mouth and untying her hands and feet but stopped short at the foot of the bed. A peculiar fluttering of the eyelids told the detective that the woman was counting on just such a movement on his part. Bill paid his victim the compliment of a chuckle as he closed the door behind him.

He went quietly down the stairs, out the door and around the corner to Eighth Avenue where a taxi was waiting at the curb. When he alighted from the cab at the Times building he was minus bills, iron box and his own watch and stick pin. Ten minutes later he closed the door of his own room from which he had already removed the lock, turned the dresser drawers and the room in general upside down and then proceeded to get leisurely into his pajamas. This done, he tied both feet securely together, put a gag, a rope all ready to slip his hands in, a handkerchief and a small bottle of chloroform on a stand near his bed and settled himself to read the serial he had started earlier in the evening. When daylight came streaming in the window he poured a few drops of chlorform on the handkerchief, slipped the gag into his mouth, fastened it securely in the back, and then worked his hands in through the wrist ropes.

At six-thirty, Jim, the man-of-all-work, whose chief business at this particular hour was to give first aid to the daylight savings plan, heard a queer swishing noise as he passed the door of Dayton's room which was partly open. He gave a sharp glance in that direction and noticed that the Yale lock was missing. He pushed the door wide open and found the detective on the floor bound and gagged. He removed the gag, freed Bill's hands and feet with his pocket knife and without waiting for explanations descended to the first floor to arouse the landlady.

In a few minutes there was the sound of hurrying footsteps from all parts of the house and the hall was filled with pajamaed and kimonaed figures.

"I thought I heard a pistol shot during the night," declared one of the boarders.

"I'm sure I heard some-one running down the stairs early this morning," came from a roomer who had just been so rudely awakened from the heavy sleep he had begun the night before.

"What did they get?" someone asked Bill.

And when he told them of the loss of his watch and pin, they wondered why he had been selected as the victim.

"I think it must have been someone who knows my habits," Bill told them. "I left the office with a large sum of money this afternoon, but instead of bringing it home with me as I generally do, I deposited it at the bank."

In the excitement no one in the house missed Miss errill. A young shoe clerk by day and musician by ght, who had been endeavoring to get acquainted ith the young lady, noticed that her lock had been tam-ered with. He called the attention of the others to is fact and after a preliminary hard knocking which ought no response, the little group entered the room, e men eagerly, the women timid. From the bed in e corner Miss Terrill's large gray eyes gazed at them mute appeal. In a second the men released her while e women endeavored to administer smelling salts and irits of camphor. She was really weakened by the ours she had lain there bound and gagged and it was few moments before she was able to tell the curious udience of what had happened the previous night. ayton admired the quickness with which she elimin-ed part of the conversation and added new dialogue. he cited her loss as money and a few trinkets.

Later in the day the detective recovered his watch nd pin reported to have been found in the booty of wo men who had been caught that morning. Miss errill failed to identify any of her trinkets among the rticles at the station house.

CHAPTER VIII.

"You've been doing fine work, young man; knew ou would, but you haven't finished your job yet," the hief told Dayton when he reported at headquarters at afternoon.

"I'm still on the track of the man, sir, and now that ve succeeded in getting Miss Terrill's bonds back r her——"

"Sorry, but that's just what you haven't done."

"But I left the iron box here for you or rather sent by Brown who had strict orders not to let it out of s sight until it was safely in your hands."

"The box contained pieces of jewelry of considerable lue but not a bond."

Bill gasped. After all his work he had overlooked the ain object of his search. Surely they were not still in e trunk. Perhaps they had been turned over to Clark.

"I'm sorry——" Dayton began.

"Don't feel sorry," the chief laughed. "You've ac-mplished in one night more than many a detective es in a month and we hope that you still have many ars of life before you to finish up the job."

Bill was disappointed. All the way down to head-uarters he had pictured the delight in Miss Terrill's es when the chief handed over the bonds. Of course, ey would both praise the way he had managed his ase" and— but what business had a detective to in-lge in day dreams? A first class one should never eam, even at night. This little jolt was just what he served.

When Dayton returned to his room on Forty-fifth reet he found that his neighbor had not changed her uarters. He was a little afraid the robbery might have used her to do so and he had no desire to lose sight her for an instant at this critical juncture. As he t his key in the lock which had been fixed during his sence he heard a woman roomer who had draped her-lf in the opposite doorway remark:

"My dear, aren't you afraid to stay here after what ened last night?"

"Not a bit," a voice from within answered. "You see, it isn't likely that they will rob the same place twice."

"Strange your things were not at the station house, especially since the man across the way recovered his watch and pin."

"It's my theory that there was another man who got away," the voice answered.

"And you ought to know if any one does," Dayton chuckled.

The next morning the chief summoned Bill to head-quarters.

"Some more good luck, young man," he announced as soon as the detective entered his office. "No, no, we haven't recovered the bonds," he added, as he noted the look of mingled relief and disappointment on the young man's face and wondered a little at the former, "but the young lady has played right into our hands. She has sent for a detective to help her locate the missing jewels."

Bill's eyes questioned.

"Of course, you're the man," the chief answered. "Disguise yourself some way—I leave that to you—and get up there as soon as possible."

A coating of dark mascaro over his blond hair, a mustache, a Van Dyke and a change of clothes and Bill was ready to embark upon a new chapter of adventure. He found Miss Terrill waiting for him in the parlor. With her was a man whom the moment he turned and faced the door Dayton recognized as Clark. After the woman had repeated to Dayton the same story she had told the roomers the morning after the robbery the detective asked if she suspected any one.

"Well I do not suspect the man who robbed the room opposite mine and who was afterwards captured by the police."

"Why not?"

"In the first place, nothing stolen from my room was found on him—if he had a confederate there is no reason why he should turn all the money and the box over to him—and in the second place the man who entered my room knew just exactly what I had in my possession."

"What makes you think that?" the detective asked sharply.

"Oh, from certain remarks he made," she answered vaguely.

"Whom do you suspect, then?"

"Some one in the house, a man who came here the day of the robbery," she said obviously for Clark's benefit. When the latter turned for an instant to look out the window she cast a significant glance in his direction.

"The crooks are beginning to suspect each other. It's a great game," Bill murmured to himself as he walked toward the Broadway car.

As he neared the Astor he heard hurried footsteps in back of him, followed by the clasp of a strong hand on his shoulder. He turned quickly and looked into the cunning face of Clark.

"I want to talk to you a few minutes, Mr. Dayton," he said.

"Talk ahead," Bill encouraged pleasantly.

"Well let's step in here for a bite," he invited.

When they had found a table in a secluded corner

of the room and given their orders to the waiter Clark resumed the conversation.

"How are you fixed?" he asked. "I mean financially," he added in reply to Dayton's questioning look.

"Oh, I have my salary," the detective answered casually.

"Well, if I make you an offer which you don't take you won't squeal, will you?" his companion queried.

"Certainly not. Fire ahead," Bill laughed.

"I'll show you how to make five thousand dollars."

"That's what I'm looking for," the detective assured him.

"On the level?"

"Strictly on the level."

"That woman back there was never robbed," he told him, leaning across the table in his eagerness. "The valuables she claims to have lost are the proceeds of a lift on the other side of the water."

"What's the object of the pretense?"

"She wants to beat the rest of her gang and get more than her share of the booty."

"But the house was robbed," Dayton insisted.

"Yes, and she's just cunning enough to have planned it all herself."

"But the man was caught."

"That may have been part of her scheme, too. You know you can easily get a man to spend a year in prison for you if you pay him well enough."

"Yes, but that would come high, so high that it would probably pay her to divide her dishonest plunder honestly."

"Not the bonds."

"What bonds?" the detective asked quietly.

"Oh, some United States bonds she had in her possession?"

"How much?"

"About two hundred thousand dollars' worth."

"Phew, that's quite a sum," Dayton exclaimed. "How did she ever come to have that much?"

Then Clark told a clever story and told it so well that Dayton was sure he must have rehearsed it frequently for just such an emergency.

"You shall have ten per cent. of every bond you recover," he concluded.

"Is that a go?"

Dayton nodded, and the two men shook on it.

"I must get into a taxi and hurry uptown," Dayton said, taking it for granted that his companion intended to go to the house downtown and report the result of the morning's meeting to the other members of the gang. "Join me?"

"Thanks. I have an appointment down in Wall Street. Goodby for the present."

Dayton gave his order "Seventy-second street," and when he had reached Fifty-second he told the driver to go over to Eighth avenue and down again to Forty-fifth.

As he had expected he found the woman waiting in the parlor.

"I thought you would return," she smiled, pulling a chair near to his and talking in undertones for fear of curious ears through the hall. "That man Clark caught up with you, told you a long story, and bribed you to sell me, didn't he?"

"How do you know?"

"And did you make a bargain with him?" she continued, ignoring his question.

"I did." The woman smiled cynically. "But I never sell out an honest client," Bill assured her.

"He claimed that I had not been robbed."

"He did," Bill replied, assuming surprise that she could have hit the mark so accurately.

"That man has pretended for several years to be a true friend of mine and I never had occasion to doubt his friendship until recently," she explained, "but since I have refused to concede to certain demands of his he has threatened to force me to do his bidding. The story has nothing to do with the matter in hand, but I will tell it to you some time in order to prove my point. But if there is any question of my identity in your mind or the truth of my claims, I can easily settle the matter to your entire satisfaction."

"How?"

"By a broker of high standing in this country who knew both my father and myself intimately in London."

CHAPTER IX.

Events had moved in such rapid succession in the Forty-fifth Street house that Bill had neglected the place he knew to be the headquarters of Clark and his gang, the building into which the former had tried to lure him the night of their first meeting. Now that he had become the confidential agent of Clark's partner he could afford to devote a little time to the movements of Clark himself. That evening he again visited the saloon in the disguise he had formerly worn. The house was unchanged. The same gloomy windows looked down upon the dull little street, a street that never aroused itself sufficiently from its habitual apathy to inquire into the affairs of its neighbors.

This evening Dayton's interest centered in the building next to Clark's, an old warehouse in the last stages of dilapidation. He surveyed it in detail from the opposite side, and then unnoticed in the dimly lighted street, crossed casually over and lost himself in its shadow. The huge door was off its hinges, and leaned limply against the building in a forlorn, dejected attitude. The detective pushed it to one side, squeezed through the small opening and found himself in a vast square of darkness. With the aid of his flash he saw that even the old staircase had capitulated to time and decay. After looking around a few minutes he discovered an old ladder, covered with dust and cobwebs. He dragged it into the position once occupied by the staircase, climbed up to the second floor, drew the ladder after him and continued this way until he was on the roof of the building. As he had judged from the view from the other side of the street it was about six feet higher than the Clark place. He attached a rope ladder he had brought with him in case prudence should dictate a hasty exit, and then jumped lightly to the roof below. With a jimmy he quickly pried open the skylight fastening and let himself into the dark hall of Clark's den.

As he took his first step forward he heard a woman's shriek. Thinking his presence had been discovered by some one in the house he turned to lift himself up through the skylight. But there was no sound of hurr

g footsteps as he had expected. Instead the shrieks ere continued, coupled with pleas for mercy. Day-n's first thought was that by some means Clark and is gang had received knowledge that Miss Terrill was guest at the Vance home, and had succeeded in lur-g her to that den. He drew his pistol and glided apidly downstairs in the direction of the cries, blam-g himself with each step that he had not insisted pon a personal guard for the girl even against her ishes. He determined that if he could reach her in me to save her he would be boss of the situation in he future.

He stopped before the door of the room from which he voices were coming. The woman's screams had topped now, but the pleading for mercy continued in ow, agonized tones. There was a chair in the hallway pposite the room. Dayton lifted it quietly to the door, tood upon it and looked through the dusty transom nto the room below. It was dimly lighted by a flick-ring kerosene lamp. For a second his heart stopped eating, for he had seen what he had expected. The an Clark stood with his back to the door, his hands lutching the throat of the girl. In the struggle her at had fallen from her head and her dark hair had een freed from the pins and hung over her face. The etective stepped down from the chair and stood still ith his hand on the door knob arrested by the girl's ords.

"Tom, you will not kill me. Remember how long e've been together. You can't let it all end like this."

Then Bill realized that in the dimly lighted room, ith the fear of the worst in his heart he, too, had een fooled by the resemblance. He climbed up on the hair again.

"I will carry out my threat if you do not tell me his instant where you have hidden those bonds."

"I swear I have told you the truth, Tom. The bonds ere stolen from me that night."

"It's a lie and you're not going to tell me any thers."

The man took one hand from the woman's throat nd pulled his watch from his pocket.

"Two minutes, Nell. You'd better hurry up with he truth."

"Tom, you dare not," the woman warned. "There s someone on our trail, and if I am not back at my ouse in the morning he will turn the city upside-down ntil he finds me."

"Did you ever know me to be scared by a detec-ive?" the man sneered. "You ought to trust me for etting away after all these years. Who was it that ranged the getaway when——"

He stopped short as if he remembered this was not he time to carry on a friendly conversation.

"One minute more, Nell."

He let his watch hang suspended by its chain to give imself the freedom of both hands.

"Last call," he said in a harsh voice.

That second the door flew open and Dayton stood on he threshold with his pistol leveled at the man's heart.

In his surprise at the interruption the man released is hold on the woman and fell back a step. She at nce realized that her opportunity had come and ashed through the door. Clark made a move as if to ollow her, but was stopped by the detective's pistol. e moved slowly back into the room completely at Dayton's mercy. The fear in his eyes showed that he knew that he was cornered at last. He kept backing to the wall, Dayton following his every step. Suddenly his hand went out behind him, there was a crash and the room was in total darkness. Bill jumped aside just as a bullet whizzed past him. Clark realized that since he had missed his man the chances for both were even and he had no desire to take an even chance.

"Who are you?" he asked, stepping quickly aside that the detective might not gauge his position from his voice.

"No need of introductions now," Dayton answered. "Well, you'd better get out of here before some of my friends come in."

Bill realized the unpleasant feature of a tussle with the entire party. Just then steps were heard coming up the stairs. They came down the hall and stopped at the door which Dayton had shoved closed after the woman. The knob turned and a man with a lamp in his hand stood on the threshold. Clark's "Look out" and the detective's leap forward to knock the lamp from the man's hand came simultaneously. There was a great scrambling in the hall for other members of the gang had followed the first man upstairs. The leader took it for granted that the stranger would go out by the front door and ran in that direction with his friends at his heels, leaving Dayton a clear field up the back stairs and through the roof to the storage house.

CHAPTER X.

The next morning the detective called on his client. Aside from a deepened pallor that might easily have been the result of a sleepless night she showed no trace of the ordeal through which she had been put by Clark in order to force from her some confession of the whereabouts of the bonds. In place of the low lace collar which she generally affected she wore a blouse buttoned tightly up to the neck. Dayton had no doubt that Clark's fingers had left their telltale imprint on the woman's white throat.

"I think I have good news for you," Dayton announced when he had made sure that the parlor was unoccupied.

"You have recovered my jewels, then?" she asked eagerly.

"I believe so."

She held out her hand.

"Oh, they are still in the possession of the thief. I have come to get you to accompany me to a certain house to identify them."

The woman's pallor deepened. Her mind reverted at once to the house of the previous evening's encounter and she had no desire to return there even under the detective's protection.

"A house? Where?" she asked.

"On Eighty-sixth Street," he answered.

"Very well," she said with evident relief. "I will be ready in five minutes."

She was silent during the trip uptown and when the taxi stopped before the Eighty-sixth Street house she surveyed the outside of the building carefully before she followed Dayton from the cab. Evidently she had been drilled in caution until it had become her second nature.

Dayton opened the door with a latch key and led the way upstairs.

"Does your man live here?" she asked after they had climbed two flights.

"On the top floor" the detective answered.

They entered a large bare looking room the shades of which were down and the shutters closed. The woman looked around inquiringly.

"Our man seems to be out," Dayton remarked, "but I know where the jewels are hidden."

He went to a trunk in a dark closet and brought out the iron box he had taken from Miss Terrill's wardrobe trunk.

"That's the box they were in," the woman said at once.

"But you must identify the jewelry." the detective told her as he opened the box and showed her the contents.

"Yes, those are mine," she assured him with relief.

"You are sure these are the diamonds that were stolen from you?" the detective asked.

"Absolutely sure."

"Will you tell me how you accumulated so many beautiful stones?" the detective asked.

"They were given to me at various times by my father," the woman answered, showing her surprise at his question.

"And they were in your possession when you left England?"

"In that box in my wardrobe trunk," she answered rather impatiently.

"Not a very safe way of carrying such valuable stones. They might easily have been stolen from you, trunk and all, on the way over." he remarked casually.

The woman started a little at his words but recovered herself quickly.

"This is not the time to discuss such a probability," she told him, making no effort to hide her annoyance.

"This is just the time to discuss not the probability, but the fact." he said. "You say you are sure these jewels were in your possession when you left England?"

"Of course. Why do you ask such strange questions?"

"Because I know they were not. They were stolen from another passenger on the same boat."

"You have allowed yourself to believe the lies Clark has been telling you against me," the woman said. "That man has a motive in trying to blacken my character. I can disprove every word he has said against me."

"But Clark did not tell me this. I learned it from another source, a very reliable one."

"You think you are very keen." the woman laughed in an endeavor to brave it out, "but you have been following so many mysteries that you are beginning to see them where they are not. Now tell me why you invented an excuse to get me to this house instead of bringing the stolen property to me, as you might easily have done."

"I brought you here," Dayton explained, "so that if you desired to make any noise you might do so without being overheard."

"You need have no fear of that unless you attempt to do me bodily harm," she assured him.

"But your cries were loud enough last night."

"How do you know anything about it?" she asked.

"Acting under your orders I trailed Clark to that house and entered just in time to save your life. By the way, is it customary in England for a woman of your standing to associate with thieves?"

"I met this man Clark on the steamer and knew nothing of his character."

"Well, I will tell you something of his character. He and his woman accomplice, Nell Davison, are wanted for a robbery and murder they committed in London."

The woman winced.

"I did not see him with any woman companion," she said.

"They were known to have taken passage on the same boat with you. Do you recognize this picture?" he asked, suddenly thrusting a small photograph into her hand. "It was forwarded from the London police department this morning."

"Oh, I can explain this." she said. "It is all due to a strange resemblance between myself——"

"And the real Katherine Terrill," Dayton interrupted. "I admit the likeness is a marked one, but not marked enough to fool any one who knew you both intimately."

He handed her another photograph, one of the real Miss Terrill, which for some reason not connected with his business he had found convenient to carry around with him of late.

"You see, there is no use of trying to keep up the game any longer. You have played well, but you must admit that you have lost."

"Has Clark confessed."

"No."

"Then how did you get all your information?"

"That is part of my profession just as getting other people's wealth is a part of yours."

"But I had nothing to do with the murder."

"I know that too. But how did Clark come to trust you with all the booty?"

"He couldn't help himself. Everything was in Miss Terrill's trunks and naturally the trunks had to be claimed by a woman."

"And didn't any one notice Miss Terrill's disappearance?"

"The minute she disappeared I became Miss Terrill."

"And you?"

"If any one missed me Clark had an explanation ready. You see I traveled as his wife."

"And when will you be ready to restore the bonds?"

"Within a half hour if you will let me leave here at once and promise me immunity."

"I promise you immunity and will pay your passage to any part of the world you desire to go but I think it will be safer for you to remain here while I get the bonds."

"They are in my trunk. Here are the keys."

"Oh no they're not."

"How do you know?"

"Because I personally conducted the tour of the jewels from your trunk to this house."

"So you were the burglar? Well, for once you were fooled by a woman, oh, not by me, but by the real Miss Terrill. That innocent looking wardrobe trunk of hers had a false bottom built specially to hold another iron box like this."

"I will be back shortly," he told her, "and if the

bonds are there you will be at liberty to take passage on the next steamer."

Dayton closed the door behind him, locking and bolting it on the outside.

CHAPTER XI.

The detective returned to his own apartment, put on the disguise in which he was known to the landlady and roomers of the Forty-fifth Street house and went back to his lodgings. When the nall was clear he crossed to the woman's room, opened the wardrobe trunk and in the place she had described found the second iron box. Before leaving the room he fitted the key into the patent lock and the cover flew open, disclosing the bonds. Feeling that it would not be safe to have them in his possession he went immediately to headquarters and turned them over to his chief.

"You have the right box this time, haven't you, young man?" the chief said. "You did the wise thing to recover all the stolen property before attempting to arrest the thieves. Can you lay your hands on them?"

"At a moment's notice, but acting upon your instructions I offered the woman, Nell Davison, immunity if she would lead to the return of Miss Terrill's property. I have therefore promised her safe passage out of the country. I believe you found, sir, that she had nothing to do with the murder."

"All right. I guess if she is safely removed from Clark's influence she will not trouble us or England any further."

"I always hate to have to get a woman, sir, especially one who——"

"One who looks so much like some one else, eh?"

The chief's good natured laugh followed Dayton as he ran down the stairs.

At the Eighty-sixth Street house he found the woman pacing up and down the floor in nervous impatience.

"You found the bonds?" she asked almost the moment she heard the key turn in the lock.

"In the very place you said. I don't see how I came to overlook them the first time."

"And I am free to go back to England?"

"If you will come with me now we will book passage for you on the very first steamer that sails."

"I suppose in the meantime I will be under some sort of surveillance?"

"Quite naturally, Miss—Miss—"

"Gray. That is really my name and I feel that I would like to have something that belongs to me honestly."

"Well. Miss Gray, I shall try to make the remainder of your stay as pleasant as possible, but you must realize that there are certain precautions which must be observed, especially since the Chief does not plan to take Clark and his confederates into custody until tomorrow."

On the way to the ticket office Miss Gray became reminiscent of her early days in England. She had met Clark when she was a very young girl living in one of the small country towns. She had found nothing in her home surroundings to interest her and she had had a great desire to see London, to become part of it. Clark had promised her all the things she longed for, above all an opportunity to cultivate the musical talent which she knew was hers. She had eloped to London with him only to find out when she arrived there that he was a married man. She had not had the courage to return to her people, so she followed the line of least resistance and became his companion.

"I really think he loved me at that time," she continued her story, "and after the first shock at my position had worn off I settled down to the life I would have led if I had really been his wife. He was kind and considerate and redeemed his promise to give me a musical education. He was proud of my voice and planned to make me a really great singer. Then one winter I had a severe case of pneumonia and when I recovered I knew that all hopes of a career were at an end. It was not until months after this that I discovered the true source of his income. My life had become so closely entwined with his that little by little I became his real partner. It is ending as all such partnerships are bound to end sooner or later."

Fortunately there was a boat sailing the next day. With the influence of his badge Dayton had no trouble securing a reservation that had just been canceled.

"And now we might as well go to the theater this evening," Dayton suggested, "but first you will then have the company of one of the women members of the Headquarters while you return to the house and prepare your things for the trip. You will spend the night at this woman's apartment."

Miss Gray made no comment upon the arrangements. In fact it seemed to Dayton that she was relieved at the thought of having protection during her remaining hours in New York.

In the time he had to himself the detective could not resist the temptation to drop in at the Vance home and call on his original client. She greeted him with:

"We have just received the news over the phone, Mr. Dayton. You have done wonderful work and so quickly, too."

Then Bill told her of the plans for Miss Gray's sailing in the morning and the arrangements they had made for the evening.

"Oh, won't you let me join you?" she asked eagerly. "You know I have a real curiosity to see my double—what woman hasn't?—and then as I told you before I am an amateur novelist. Who knows how many chapters I may be able to get from this evening's outing?"

Dayton did not appear very enthusiastic about the plan. He was not anxious that their first evening together should be so well chaperoned. But Mr. Vance was giving his opinion.

"I can't see any harm in it if the child really wants to go. We thought it wise to keep her well under our eye until things were settled. But now we're going to start to make up for this nun-like existence she has been living."

And so the matter was settled. Bill managed to clear a part of Fate's debt to him by calling for Miss Terrill a full hour before it was really necessary and driving half way around town in order to finally arrive at the

apartment house where the woman detective was guarding Miss Gray. With the clouded mind of the man in love it never occurred to him that his client might see through the subterfuge. It was a funny whim, wanting to see one's double, he thought, but then women did have queer notions, bless them! He wondered how they would act when they came face to face. He watched them closely as they shook hands. There was a moment of embarrassed restraint and then there came the relief of laughter.

"It's just like looking into the mirror," Miss Terrill commented finally.

"I wish it were," Miss Gray said with a note of wistfulness in her voice.

In the theater and at the supper which followed Dayton wondered at the stupidity of the world in general and of New York in particular. The nudging and the whisper "Twins" brought scowls of disproval to his face. Any one with half an eye could see that Miss Terrill was younger, years younger, and that there was a certain, well, a certain something that distinguished her from Miss Gray, in fact, from every other woman in the world. But then what could one expect from a musical-comedy-cabaret-mad populace?

"Mr. Vance and I have mutual friends sailing on the boat with you tomorrow, and we are going down to wish them 'Bon Voyage,'" Miss Terrill said as the party separated.

"But you won't——?"

"Of course not," answered Miss Terrill. "I understand it's to be a clean slate from today on."

CHAPTER XII.

Dayton and Miss Gray arrived at the dock long before sailing time. The latter was anxious to get settled in her stateroom and avoid the general bustle of farewell of her fellow travelers. Bill took his stand where he could command a full view of the newcomers. He scanned the face of each one but Miss Terrill was not among them. Finally Mr. Vance approached the gangplank with a party of friends. He looked about him auxiously and then spied Dayton.

"Have you seen anything of Katherine?" he asked anxiously.

"I have been watching for her," Dayton replied. "Didn't she leave the house with you?"

"No, an hour earlier. She said she had some purchases she wished to make and would meet us here."

"She should never have gone alone."

"But I thought the danger was over. Clark and his men have been taken into custody, haven't they?"

"Not yet. The Chief ordered their arrest this evening."

At that moment Miss Gray joined them.

"Go to the house on X—+ Street at once," she said. "Take your men to arrest Clark. If you can find no trace of Miss Terrill search the cellar."

On the back of an envelope she drew a hasty diagram showing a stone cell in which Clark and his confederates found it convenient to conceal the victims their profession marked for trouble.

Mr. Vance phoned the Central Office for the me who were to take the prisoners while Dayton jumpe into a taxi and gave his orders to break all speed law Twice they were held up by traffic policemen but flash of the detective's badge brought the order to co tinue. Bill left the cab at the corner and proceeded c foot to the warehouse. He slipped unnoticed throu the door and paced the floor impatiently waiting th arrival of his helpers. He knew it was useless to ent the house alone. Five minutes passed and then one l one, so there would be no danger of attracting the a tention of the passersby, six men slipped into the gloo of the empty warehouse. Dayton gave his orders i whispered tones. When they had made their entran by the same method followed by the detective on h previous visit the men began to search the house whi Bill made his way at once to the cellar, guided by Mi Gray's plan. There in the stone cell he found Mi Terrill gazing into space with the unseeing stare hopelessness. She did not turn as Dayton entered. The a whispered "Katherine" brought her to her feet an some way or other right into Bill's arms.

In frightened tones she told him how when she ha entered a taxi in front of the store where she had do her shopping, a figure crouching in the corner towar the curb had clamped a gag over her mouth, the ca had shot forward, and sped to the house in which sh was now imprisoned. The man she said was not th one she had described as among the steerage passe gers. As she had been dragged through the gloomy ha a voice coming out of one of the dark rooms ha greeted her with:

"You won't doublecross me again, Nell, and whe you're going there won't be much chance to cash tho bonds."

* * * * *

Bill hadn't admitted it even to himself, but in th last few days he had stolen precious moments from h work to mentally set the stage for the love scene in th last reel. A flower-decked garden had vied with th moonlight bathed yacht of some unknown friend. H had written a five-reel scenario—not a two. But the there was no critical audience to please and as long a the heroine smiled happily into his eyes as the pictu faded out all was indeed well!

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THE BANKER'S SECRET

By CAPTAIN JOHN McBRIDE.

"There is not another box like it in existence," the old banker said to Murphy. "It was made specially for me, and the model was my own design. It was of plain silver, thick and solid, and about the size of a cigar-case."

"And what were the contents, Mr. Sedley?" the detective ventured to inquire.

"The contents concern nobody but myself," he returned, tartly, and with a flash of irritation staining his wrinkled old visage from his bald forehead to his cleanly shaven chin.

"That is a foregone conclusion," said Jerry, smiling a little at what seemed a peculiarly needless exasperation. "But the question is: Were the contents of the box of a nature which could in any way be made advantageous to the thief? If you would have me be of service you must permit me to get at the true inwardness of the case, as a Bostonian aesthetic would say."

Banker Sedley took off his spectacles, polished the gold rims and crystal lens with an immaculate white silk handkerchief, knit his shaggy gray brows and deliberated.

"No one but myself can open the box without sundering the metal itself. It is precisely like a broad, thin ingot of silver, and the hinges and lock are both entirely concealed," he said, presently.

"Well?" said the operative, still determined to get at the true inwardness of the robbery.

"I do not mind conceding," Sedley added, reluctantly, "that it holds a paper of uncommon importance, as the thief has doubtlessly surmised. He may intend to utilize that paper as a measure to extort what I cannot and will not give."

"And you suspect young Wilbur Barry—who is still in your employ as private secretary, and who is to marry your ward, Cora De Vaber?" asked Murphy.

Again that peculiar flush of lurid crimson stained his features, even to the nape of the wrinkled old neck within his immense white collar.

"No one else has access to my study," he answered, with a good deal of dignity. "By the aid of the missing bonds and the marked bank-notes you will have no difficulty in fixing the robbery upon him, I think."

"You seem anxious that I should do so, certainly, I think," said Jerry, laughing carelessly.

"Naturally I should like to see guilt punished," he responded, with an accession of dignity and haughty gaze—meant evidently to squelch the detective's impertinence. "But I will be lenient toward him—if he will restore the box and contents intact, he shall not be prosecuted for the theft of the money. I will let him go free on condition that he leaves the country forever."

"How can you be sure no one else has had access to your study" asked Jerry. "You mentioned a secret passage, you know."

"The secret passage has been unused for a generation," he said impatiently, "and I suppose Wilbur is ignorant of it. But I do not intend to be unfair. I intend to afford the young rascal ever chance to clear himself. You can examine the hidden corridor, if you think best," he concluded, as he took up his natty gloves and shining beaver, and somewhat loftily bowed himself from the office.

"Everybody must have some sort of a skeleton in the closet, and our respected Banker Sedley is not exempt," said Jerry to himself, as some time later he started on a tour of inspection at the Sedley residence.

The old mansion was an unpretentious structure of red brick in a spacious suburban inclosure of carefully tended lawn sloping down to the Hudson River, and dotted here and there wih a shadowy tree, a trellised vine, or a gorgeous flowerplot. It had been built in a style deemed princely in the days of our Knickerbocker ancestors, but there had been later additions—fantastic wings and rambling extensions—which rendered a secret passage alike feasible and undiscoverable.

Despite the assertion of the banker that the passage had been unused for a generation, Murphy noted marks of decidedly fresh footsteps in the thick dust of the stairs, and the locks and bolts, too, moved easily, though crusted with the rust of years.

And, besides, there was a tiny pool of yet undried blood on the bricked floor, and a disturbance of the accumulated dust as if there had been a struggle of some sort.

The footsteps were those of a woman; and the torn fragment of a feminine habiliment dangled from a broken nail stub protruding from a flanking wall of the corridor.

"There is the evidence which exculpates Wilbur Barry," thought Jerry, as he examined the fragment—a torn and tattered strip of what once had been a rich and elegant shawl of maize—colored Canton crepe. "But who is the woman? And what is the banker's secret? I must interview his word."

The young lady was not at all averse to the interview; indeed, she seemed almost ferverishly eager to communicate every detail of which she was cognizant.

"What are your theories, Miss De Vaber—or have you none?" queried the officer, as he indulged in an unobtrustive scrutiny of the prettiest creature whom he had ever beheld.

She was a slim brunette, simple of dress, gentle of manner, and sweet of face. Her black eyes were like the eyes of a Madonna she wore her jetty hair drawn smoothly away from her low brows, and in her agita-

tion the color in her cheeks glowed like flame behind alabaster.

"My theories are not what my guardian professes to believe," she said, with a passionate scorn she did not attempt to suppress. "I know Wilbur never took the money, and I am convinced that—" and then she checked herself.

"My dear young lady," Murphy said, as she seemed doubtful about the propriety of disclosing her convictions, "you may be perfectly frank with me. You feel that danger threatens your lover, and you would like to defend him if possible! You may confide your inmost thoughts, your wildest fancies, to me—and whatever happens the confidence shall be held inviolate, I will promise you."

For a moment she seemed to debate with herself the expediency—or the delicacy rather, perhaps—of such a confidence, but concern for her lover conquered her scruples.

"My guardian has hoped I would become his wife," said she, blushing charmingly, "and when he learned of my love for Wilbur, he was furious. In his anger, he is too glad to believe my betrothed guilty."

"I cannot see what bearing that has on the case, though," said the detective.

"I am convinced Mr. Sedley has not revealed all he might," she averred. "There is something in his looks which has aroused my suspicions of I know not what. I am afraid I really hated him while he was in here talking to me this morning before he went down to business."

"Yes?" he commented encouragingly.

"He sat down in his most dignified fashion and peered over his glasses at me as if he suspected I were the thief myself. And I just looked him straight in the face and warned him the end was not yet," the charming Miss De Vaber continued passionately.

"What end do you foresee?" asked Murphy, with an interest rapidly evaporating.

"I foresee nothing," she replied. "I only know that within another month I shall be mistress of my own fortune, and that I shall spend every dollar, if need be, to prove Wilbur Barry blameless, and to expose the snare which has been woven for him."

There was nothing material to be gained from her random conjectures, that was certain. And that there was any reason to connect her with the mystery of the secret corridor Murphy doubted. And so he terminated the unsatisfactory interview and left the house.

As he turned into the avenue which just there flanked the river he perceived a group of persons hovering about some object lying at the end of a dilapidated and nearly abandoned pier. Instinctively he understood that someone,—drowned or drowning—had just been drawn from the water, and with the always alert curiosity of his profession he hastened to the wharf.

And his professional curiosity was gratified in a way which he assuredly had not anticipated.

For there, on the rotted, sagging timbers, lay a woman, drenched, gasping, and almost senseless; there was a wound on her forehead, and blood was clotted in her loosened hair; and fastened about her shoulders was a worn and tattered maize-colored shawl of Canton crepe, showing a broad rent which would accurately tally with the fragment in Murphy's possession.

The woman was no longer young—but something less than forty, perhaps. But she was still handsome of feature and figure, even though the one was impressed with the seal of evil, and the other was clothed in the garments of poverty.

"She was moping since daylight on the string-piece for a bit of air, I reckon, and all at once she went over headlong as though in a faint," explained one of the party who had rescued her almost before the waters closed over her fainting form.

"I was about searching for her," the detective said, truthfully enough in one way, and as quietly as if she were an erratic member of his own family and he had expected to find her in some kind of predicament. "And now, my good fellow, you just get me a car from the garage down the street, while I see what I can do for her."

A judicious tip insured his alacrity, and a half-hour later I was riding away with the woman, who was slowly reviving as her chilled blood was warmed by the liberal portion of brandy which Jerry had administered.

"Who are you, and where are you taking me?" she asked, none too amiably, as she began to realize that something unusual was happening.

"You are in my custody—a prisoner charged with being an accomplice in the robbery of certain valuables from Mr. Sedley's study last night," said Murphy at a venture, and with his sternest official aspect.

"Ah!" she muttered under her breath, and with a look which puzzled him.

Alarm and defiance, menace and despair, were all expressed upon her singularly handsome features.

"Does Hiram Sedley accuse us? He dare not!" she pursued, with a short and rasping laugh; her hands clenched, her teeth gleaming through her parted lips like those of a tigress at bay.

The response was certainly a tacit admission that she, and young Barry no less, were somehow associated with the mystery of the affair; and Jerry felt he had incidentally secured a clew of the utmost importance to the silver box.

Murphy was an early visitor to the Sedley residence the next morning, and established a precedent of his own by taking with him the woman, whom he ensconced in a room opening to the study, while he proceeded to have a consultation with the banker.

"So you think I shall be justified in causing the arrest of my secretary. I have already had a warrant issued. I expect an officer, indeed, at any moment. I am sorry for the young man, too," he said, as he turned a rapid glance, which struck Jerry as being of jealous hostility rather than of sorrow, toward a window overlooking the lawn, where young Barry at the moment was walking with the pretty heiress.

"On the contrary," Jerry answered him, "I think the warrant is premature. The person who gained access to the study and appropriated the box, who secured an egress by pushing yonder picture panel aside on its cunning grooves, who so passed down the secret stairs and through the private corridor is a woman, and she had no accomplice."

"A woman!" he repeated, as he jerked his gold-rimmed glasses from his startled eyes.

"She was terrified lest she should be seen and

heard before she could be certain her purpose was accomplished," pursued Murphy. "She was faint with fear and weak with hunger, and in her haste she tripped and fell. She left a pool of blood and a fragment of her shawl behind. I identified her by the tear of that article and by the bruise on her forehead, just as she was drawn from the river, into which she had tumbled while still dazed and giddy by her fall in the corridor. The box was in her possession."

"I do not know of what interest these details are to me," Banker Sedley remarked, with an attempt of frigid dignity, although every particle of color had faded from his wrinkled old visage, and great drops of sweat were dripping over his shaggy brows. "The woman is only the accomplice of my secretary, I dare say. I have ascertained that last evening he exchanged one of the marked bank notes for stationery at the little store down the street. No clemency should be shown either. I shall see that the law does not relax its grip upon them. But, by the way, you have brought the box with you, of course," he added, with an effort to restrain an anxiety only too perceptible.

"I have brought the woman herself," said the officer, as he turned to admit the visitor, who was seated in the next room.

"You are the one who will need clemency, Hiram Sedley," she began, with her short, rasping laugh. "Will the law relax its grip upon you, do you think, when it is known you have squandered the fortune intrusted to you for another?"

He shifted his feet uneasily, fumbled his spectacles, glared threateningly and contemptuously toward her, but said not a word.

"Perhaps you believe I had disappeared forever in the black vortex of misery and evil to which your cruelties drove me! Perhaps you believed I should never appear to announce a certain clandestine marriage, the proof of which you kept, discreetly, in a certain silver box," she continued. "But I have been vigilant of all your doings; I am aware of all your losses in speculation. Bankruptcy lurks on the threshold of your office. If you could marry your ward—Miss De Veber—she might not be too curious about the investments of her fortune, and you could consider yourself safe from investigations. But while I—your legal wife—am living, you can make no arrangements of that kind, Hiram Sedley."

"You are raving!—you are a crazy woman! Give me the box and get out. I demand the box and I demand you take your prisoner away," Sedley exclaimed, as he turned to Murphy with a gesture which reminded me of a drowning man, frenzied and clutching at straws.

"You dare not send me away a prisoner—I know too much," she said, with mocking composure. "Through the secret panel I watched you but a night ago. I saw you put marked bank-notes in the wallet of a coat left in your study; I heard your muttered words of treacherous satisfaction; you wanted to degrade the lover of your ward in her sight, and so rid yourself of an obstacle in your way of safety. The coat belongs to Wilbur Barry!—you had planned to destroy him as you did his mother—for Wilbur is your son and mine," she added with a tremor of emotion in her rasping tones.

"Good God!" he groaned almost inaudibly as he put up one unsteady hand to shadow his features, which had turned the hue of ashes.

Suddenly he seemed to realize that his doom had irrevocably overtaken him, and with a suppressed imprecation he dropped back into the chair from which he had wrathfully half risen.

"Go away," he said imperiously. "Go away, both of you!—I want to think."

The woman turned scornfully and left the room, and a moment later Murphy followed her.

In the hall below an officer was standing; he had arrived with the warrant for young Barry, who looked too amazed at the revelations to utter a syllable of protestation.

"The warrant was unnecessary; everything has been explained. I will answer for Mr. Barry," said Murphy to the officer, who hesitated an instant, and then departed.

"This indignity will not go unpunished," declared Miss De Veber, who was clinging consolingly to her lover, and whose beautiful black eyes were flashing with tears and resentment.

Just then through all the quiet old house echoed the sharp report of a pistol.

"He has put himself beyond the reach of earthly punishment," the strange woman whispered with something like awe, and with a grim motion in the direction of the study.

The detective turned and ran hurriedly back up the stairs, but young Barry had already preceded him in that direction.

His fine face was white as marble as he flung open the door and gazed wildly at his enemy, who had fallen forward upon his desk, the fatal pistol still smoking in one extended hand.

"A man of honor ought to die like this," burst unconsciously from Wilbur's paling lips.

But Hiram Sedley's death was a consonant end to his life.

Confronted with bankruptcy, disgrace and perhaps with an ignominious trial for his wrong doing he preferred the refuge of the suicide's grave.

The old silver box contained the certificate of his marriage with the unacknowledged wife who had presented herself to thwart his plans and to hinder the downfall of a son whose existence she had chosen not to reveal to him.

Wilbur never assumed the cognomen of the father whom he had so much cause to disrespect, and his repentant mother did not long survive to be the recipient of his generous sympathy.

The young man was soon afterward united to the defrauded heiress, and although her fortune had been squandered in her guardian's speculations, there is no happier couple in the city.

Fight Tuberculosis. Use Red Cross Christmas Seals.

THE DETECTIVE'S MISTAKE

A SERIAL STORY.

BY GILBERT MACKEY.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MAN WITH THE BAMBOO CANE.

Here was certainly a most important discovery.

The detective little thought, however, that he was destined within the next few moments to make a second discovery of more importance still.

"I'll take a dozen bass strings of your own make," he said, anxious to remove from the mind of the instrument dealer any suspicion which he might be induced to entertain that he was other than what he seemed. "I must have got those broken pieces mixed; your strings are good enough for me."

"Dey are goot," said the old man, taking down a box, and producing the strings, "but I do not claim dot dey are de pest. See, dis is de difference, mein friendt; I blays dis banjo mit strings of mein own make.

'Twang, twang, twang! He sounds all-ride, huh! Den listen to dis banjo. He has de French! Ha, listen to de silvery bass:

"Tum, tum, tum! Dot ish betterish good! I make no string like dot."

As the old German spoke he first strummed upon one banjo, which he took down from a nail, and then upon another, which he carefully removed from a case.

The first was an ordinary instrument enough, but the second was extraordinary to the last degree.

It was silver-mounted, and, in addition, each key was heavily plated with gold, while the end of the wooden portion, to which the strings were attached, was elegantly carved in the representation of the head of a dog.

Sim Scudder with difficulty smothered an exclamation of surprise.

Perfectly well he remembered to have seen that banjo before.

"Where did you get this instrument?" he asked, taking the ornamented banjo in his hand.

"Dot banjo?" replied the German, reflectively. "I come py him, mein frendt' in a very singular vay. First, I make him, ten—no, fifteen years ago. Den I sell him to a Deutscher man vot vonce gif lesson on Broadvay. He ish dead long ago, poor fellow, and now back gomes his banjo owit of de river fished up."

"Fished up out of the river?"

"Yes; a boy found it floating over by dot Navy Yard in Prooklyn, von day now a year ago. He haf a sthring tied about de neck, as though some von vished to drown him, so he never be seen again. On dot sthring dere vos vonce tied a stone, but, you see, he vos too loosely tied and schlipped owit and de banjo float. De poy fish him owit of de vater and pring him pack to me."

"What a strange story! But what kind of a bass string was on it when the boy brought this banjo to you?"

"Bass sthring? Dere vas not any. It vas gone."

"And that scrap was of a French string?"

"Yes; like dese two long pieces vot pelong to you."

Again Sim Scudder seized the banjo and examined it in every part with the greatest care.

"It is—it must be the same," he murmured. "Never could there be two banjos made like that. Merciful God! can this indeed be true. Oh! Al Constantine, my poor young friend, for your long sufferings you have only my own carelessness to blame! Had I but looked more attentively into the matter of this banjo string in the first place, I should have then avoided the most terrible of terrible mistakes."

Without another word he exhibited to the astonished instrument dealer his shield, and telling him briefly that he must keep that banjo subject to the demands of the authorities as a possible clew to a crime, he paid for the dozen strings which he had purchased and hurriedly left the shop.

What was the nature of the clew he had so strangely stumbled upon!

To whom had that dog-headed banjo belonged?

As it did not please Mr. Detective Scudder at that precise moment to express his thoughts aloud, there remains no alternative save for us to maintain an equal silence until he does.

An entire change had now come over the detective's conception of the case.

At first sceptical, then certain, but lately doubtful, of the guilt of Alfred Constantine, he had now become certain that he was an innocent man.

"I must save him, and I will, and I must save poor Andy as well.

"Merciful Heaven what a terrible crime! With the clew I now hold, the race of that scoundrel and his confederates cannot have long to run.

"But I must move with great caution," he added, as he ascended the steps of the Holly Tree Inn. "Not for a thousand worlds would I give the alarm until I have the noose tightened round his wretched neck. Now for that old fraud John Dorris. Let us hear what lies he has got to tell."

He opened the door and entered the restaurant.

The pious Mr. Dorris was about closing for the night.

With him the detective hardly knew how to proceed.

The man knew him perfectly well, he having had occasion several times to visit him in connection with the Gaylord murder case.

If he told him his actual business, to gain intelligence of the whereabouts of Andy Fenn, he not only could hope to learn nothing, but he might cause the old

known, which was precisely what he did not want him to do.

That he must use subterfuge was plain and he approached the man scarce knowing what to say.

"Good-evening, Mr. Dorris."

"Ah! Mr. Scudder, my dear young friend, what pleasure it gives me to see you again. What can I do for you to-night? I was just about closing up."

"I wanted to leave a message for my friend Andrew Fenn. I believe he sometimes takes his meals with you." Narrowly the detective regarded the man as he spoke.

The red-nosed hypocrite did not exhibit the sightest concern.

"He knows nothing," he thought. "I know him; he's as nervous as an old woman. Had he a hand in Andy's disappearance he would certainly have shown it in some way or another—of that I am sure."

"Why, he comes in here once in a while, Mr. Scudder; was here twice to-day, in fact, but I can't tell you when he may come again. Like all sinful worldlings, that young man's movements are uncertain. Far better would it be for him were he to give as much attention to the salvation of his immortal soul as he does to stuffing his stomach with food."

"Precious little danger of any one dying from over eating here," thought Scudder, as he replied aloud:

'True, Mr. Dorris. The salvation of our souls should left in the world; half of us are but poor blind fools. Where's Miss Jennie, by the way?"

The face of the restaurant-keeper clouded.

"She's gone," he hissed, fiercely; "and let me add that she's gone, I hope, to stay. After her most unwomanly and atrocious exhibition of spite toward me at the trial yesterday, she was wise enough to show her face here. Where she has gone to I neither know, nor do I care, so long as I never see her again."

Rage, anger and hate were apparent upon every feature of the countenance of this alleged meek and lowly Christian now.

"But her immortal soul, Doris?" said Sim Scudder, with a laugh; "how about that, may I ask?"

"Her soul may yet be converted to the fold but by another shepherd. I have done my duty by the girl; she is incorrigible. I can do no more."

This remark began in tones of the most bitter hatred; it ended with a pious snivel most disgusting to behold.

"Well, tell Fenn to meet me at police headquarters at nine tomorrow morning, if he comes in here to breakfast. Good-night, Dorris. I'm off."

"Good-night, Mr. Scudder, good-night. I'll be sure to remember your message should the young man appear. Allow me, dear friend, to present you with a tract upon the conversion of a hardened sinner at the early age of eight——"

The closing remarks of the wretched hypocrite were, however, lost to the detective's ears, for he had already left the Holly Tree Inn, and was hurrying on toward the Bowery once more.

"There remains but one thing more that I can do tonight," he muttered. "It is to visit that Bayard Street den, and with police assistance attempt to find the woman, Bowery Mag. Once before she entrapped Andy into that place. I feel that I have been to blame in not thinking of her before.

He hurried on toward Bayard Street, and stopped before the entrance to Shampansky's saloon.

"This must be the place," he said to himself. "Yes, I am sure it is. Shall I enter alone first, and make a few cautious enquiries as to the woman? or shall I call an officer to my aid and search the house at once?"

As these thoughts passed through the mind of the detective, he suddenly felt a light hand laid upon his arm.

A young and fashionably dressed man stood beside him, his upper lip shaded by a light mustache, his dress a black derby hat, black coat and light cassimere pantaloons, while in his hand he carried a bamboo cane.

"See, Detective Scudder," he whispered, in a high-pitched boyish voice, "if you would save the life of Alfred Constantine, if you would solve the mystery of the disappearance of Andrew Fenn, yonder is the man you need to watch. Heed my words, and watch him well."

Instinctively the detective looked in the direction indicated.

To his intense astonishment he beheld his old friend, Maurice Barrytown, in the act of descending the steps of Shampansky's saloon.

He turned suddenly with the intention of demanding from the young man the meaning of his strange words.

But Sim Scudder was too late.

The young man with the bamboo cane was nowhere to be seen.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE OLD CELLAR.

Andy Fenn had scarcely time to realize the meaning of the sudden pressure upon his throat, of the falling sensation caused by the dragging of his body backward through the rear window of Shampansky's saloon, down the ladder and to the ground, when he found himself lying upon his back upon the stone pavement in the yard in the rear of the saloon, with two men bending over him, one seated on his stomach and holding his arms, the other pinning his legs to the ground.

"Tie him, Herman," said he who held the arms, whom Andy instantly recognized as the men with the great beard, previously observed by him in conversation with Bowery Mag in the "Sailors' Return." "Tie the meddling young scoundrel, and gag him, and I will reward you well!"

"But vot you do mit him den?" demanded the other, in broken English, adding some words in what might have been German, or, so far as Andy was concerned, any language under the sun, for the boy understood no tongue save his own.

The man uttered some unintelligible reply in the same language.

Again Andy was struck, not only with a general air of familiarity which this individual bore to some one whom he had known, not only in form, but likewise in the intonation of his voice.

Who was he?

Where had he heard that voice before?

That an attempt was being made to disguise it was evident, an attempt that did not wholly succeed.

Andy could have sworn that the voice was that of some one he intimately knew, made purposely gruff and deep.

Now all this transpired in less than a moment, and during the whole time one great hand of the bearded man was pressed over the mouth of the boy in such a manner as to have rendered it utterly useless for him to attempt to utter a cry.

Before Andy Fenn had time to actually collect his wits, he found himself gagged, bound and dragged through a cellar door, opened by the man Herman, and down a flight of stone steps.

The door was closed behind him instantly, and total darkness reigned.

Bitterly the boy regretted his folly in attempting to cope with this villainous gang alone.

Had he waited quietly in the Thespian Garden until the arrival of the detective, instead of following the advice of the well-dressed young stranger, evidently only a decoy to entice him away, all might have been well.

But it was too late to regret this now.

He had deliberately walked into the trap set for him, and was at the mercy of those who, if it served their purpose, would not hesitate to take his life.

Whoever these persons were, they evidently knew the secret of the Gaylord murder, and had determined to so dispose of him that he should be rendered powerless to interfere with their plans.

The bearded man now had him by the head and shoulders, while his companions grasped him by the feet.

In a moment he was again dropped upon the ground, and the scratch of a match was heard, and the sickly flame of a tallow candle lighted up the scene.

The men had come to a halt before what appeared to be nothing but the solid stone of the cellar wall.

"Open the door, Herman," said the bearded man, producing a handkerchief and mopping his forehead; "the young fool is heavier than I thought."

The German stooped and seemed to be examining something at the base of the wall.

Suddenly a number of stones were seen to move slowly inward, in the form of a solid mass.

A narrow passage was disclosed, leading into the darkness beyond.

"See here, you young cub, will you walk quietly, or have we got to carry you?" demanded the bearded man, giving the prostrate boy a savage kick.

Gagged as he was, Andy could make no reply.

The man stooped and loosened the bonds from his feet, and seizing him by the arm, jerked him to his feet.

"Follow Herman," he said, briefly, "and if you attempt any capers you will find a bullet in your brain."

The German went ahead, bearing the candle. Andy followed, and the bearded man brought up the rear.

The passage through which they advanced was totally dark, and not over three feet in width.

For the distance of perhaps one hundred feet they proceeded in a straight line, then turned sharply to the right, continued for about the same space, and came to a halt before an iron door.

This the German unlocked with a key which he produced from his pocket, and ushered his prisoner into a large underground apartment.

It seemed to be the sub-cellar of some building of more than ordinary size.

Cases of dry goods, piles of ready-made clothing, silks, laces, hardware, and goods of every sort and kind were scattered about the cellar.

It needed but one glance from a boy as well versed as was Andy with the ways of the world to realize that he was in the underground storehouse of a "fence"—the repository of a receiver of stolen goods.

He had no time to think of the matter, however, for the bearded man pushing him before him, forced him to follow the German, Herman, into the smaller room mentioned, of which he had already opened the door.

This appeared to serve the double purpose of office for the custodian of the goods displayed in the outer apartment and as a sleeping place for some one, as was testified by a rude cot at one side of the narrow room.

"Sit down," said the bearded man, pointing to a stool. "Herman, tie his feet again, and remove the gag, and then leave us. I want to talk privately with this fresh young gentleman, and see if I can bring him to my views."

The man's order was instantly executed.

Andy, seated upon a low, wooden stool, bound hand and foot, but free to make what noise he liked, sat opposite the scoundrel who had entrapped him so cleverly.

But, although free, his lips uttered no sound. To cry for help he felt would be utterly useless.

Unquestionably he was far removed from the hearing of anyone in the building above, and even were this not the case, was there any probability that this building was other than some vile den filled with cut-throats and thieves?

The bearded man seated himself upon the cot, pushing the bedclothes, which were tumbled in a heap, carelessly to one side.

"Well, Andy Fenn," he said, slowly, "and what do you mean by poking that long nose of yours in where it has no business to be? Why couldn't you mind your own concerns and leave those of other people alone?"

Andy gazed at the speaker in perplexity.

More familiar than ever was this man's voice now, but still he was unable to place him, puzzle his brain as he would.

Who could he be?

Where had he heard that voice before?

"I don't know you," he replied, as calmly as possible. "I have no interest in your concerns. What do you mean by treating me thus?"

"I mean to remove you from my path forever. I mean to have an end to this perpetual dogging at my heels."

(To Be Continued.)

Are You Helping the Red Cross? Now Is the Time to Begin.

STRANGE EXPERIENCES

IN A TRANCE.

I once had the misfortune to fall into a trance and the family doctor pronounced me dead. Yet, I was conscious of all that was said and done around me. I could not move a muscle and laid there watching my weeping relatives mourning over me. They laid me on an ironing board, my body was washed, an undertaker measured me for shroud and coffin and said he would be back in the evening to embalm me. I did not have any of the celestial imaginings other people claim. I did not get a glimpse of heaven, or hell either, for that matter. I just simply lay there like a stone, worried to a frazzle for fear they would bury me alive. My wife sat in the room to watch my body, crying all the time. I felt cold all over, and remember having a horror of being packed in ice. Towards night the undertaker and his assistants arrived with their embalming outfit and I was left alone with them. I guess the strain on my mind brought me back to animation for I sat up suddenly, scaring the wits out of them, and the next I knew they had me in bed again with the doctor in attendance. Of course I got over it or I would not now be giving you this account.

ROBERT M. McKINEY.

EXPENSIVE FOOD.

Your Strange Experience Department is spendid as it permits of an interchange of ideas among your readers and there is nothing more interesting than the odd things that happen in our lives. I am glad you started it, and humbly submit my own experience hoping it will interest some of your readers. When I was a young man I was employed as a clerk in a grocery store. One Saturday night after we closed up the boss counted his cash. There was a fifty dollar bill among the bank notes and he left all the money on the counter and hurried home, as he was summoned by phone to his sick wife. He told me to take care of the cash. I saw him to the door and returning to the money I swept it into a box and locked it in the little safe. Next day the boss took out the cash, counted it, and called me. The fifty dollar bill had vanished. He looked at me suspiciously and we searched every nook and corner, but failed to find it. Then the boss accused me of stealing the bill. Of course, I indignantly denied it and I was arrested, but acquitted. I never went back to work for that German again, but a few years later, after he was dead, I hired the same store and opened a grocery of my own. While I was doing some alterations, I tore down the partition and there lay the missing fifty dollar bill, close to a rat hole in the surbase. When I let the grocer out that night a rodent must have purloined the bill and dragged it into the hole. The end of the bill was nibbled. As the Dutchman was dead, I compensated myself for the injury he did me by keeping the bill.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.

AN EXAMPLE OF TELEPATHY.

A few weeks ago I had the most peculiar experience of my life. My mother had two children—twin girls—of whom I was one. Although my sister and I were almost exactly alike in appearance, height, weight, actions, voice and trend of thought, our characters were somewhat dissimilar. She was intensely high spirited, while I was calm and placid. On the 5th of September, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, I drove up to the door of our Brooklyn home in a high-powered runabout in which I had been shopping and my mother came out of the basement, met me at the curb with a worried expression and asked:

"Have you seen anything of Sally? She has been gone all day."

"She told me she was going to call on her schoolmate, Miss L—, who lives on Avenue U, not from from Sheepshead Bay," I answered, "but she also said she would be home by 3 o'clock so I could drive her to the dentist's—that is why I am here on time."

I saw that my mother was troubled and uneasy and the more I looked at her the more I began to share her feelings as I knew my sister was the soul of promptness. In fact, I suddenly grew more nervous than my mother was, and a sort of frenzy began to take possession of my mind. Then, all at once, I seemed to hear a piercing shriek that brought a startled exclamation from my lips and a dull gray veil seemed to cloud my vision. At the same time I distinctly heard my sister's voice calling:

"Help me; Mary, I am burning up!"

A chill of horror passed through me. I flung off the lethargy into which I had fallen and glaring at my mother I asked:

"Did you hear that?"

"Hear what, child? I didn't hear anything," mother answered.

I did not wish to frighten her by explaining the weird circumstances, so I muttered that I would go and get Annie and started the car off like mad. A feeling took possession of me that my sister was in danger and something seemed to fiercely impell me toward Sheepshead Bay. I broke all the speed ordinances in driving my car down the Boulevard and in an incredibly short space of time swung into Avenue U. Ahead on the left stood the handsome home of

Annie's friend, all in flames, and a crowd fast gathering. As I raced up I met Miss L., who was crying and wringing her hands in despair.

"Where is Annie?" I screamed at her.

"In my bedroom," she sobbed. "She fell and broke her leg. I tried to get her out, but she was too heavy. The smoke and flames frightened me and I ran out. Just as I was leaving the poor thing shrieked, 'Help me, Mary; I am burning up!' I'm afraid she was killed."

They were the very words I heard. Filled with terror, I rushed into the house and being familiar with its construction, I found Miss L.'s bedroom. The heat stifled and the smoke choked me but I pushed on until I found Annie's unconscious figure lying on the floor. I tried to drag her into the hall, but just then the firemen arrived and got us both out.

In time my sister recovered and in a conversation I had with her she told me that when she was abandoned to die in the burning room there was a terrible strain on her mind. All she could think of was me and in her despair she remembered calling to me to help her. In my own nervous, receptive state of mind her appeal, no doubt, came through the ether much the same as the wireless works and I received the message mentally.

MARY M. BELL.

A HAUNTING DREAM.

My strange experience has to do with dreams. I cannot attempt to explain the singular fabric of that mental state which produces these sleeping illusions. But I do know that some dreams come true. The queer part of my case is that I have been dreaming the same dream at intervals of every three months for the past fourteen years. The same dream over and over again, mind you, which in itself, is certainly very unusual, when it is considered that that dream has recurred regularly for so many years in succession. The dream is one of the vague, elusive kind, which is vivid enough while in progress, but cannot be distinctly remembered in my waking moments. Picture me standing in a great void in the gray dusk pushing and rolling a huge iron ball, so gigantic that it towers high above my head, and in weight must run into thousands of tons. Yet it does not require much exertion on my part to move it. Indeed, it is an easy matter to roll it with one hand. My chief anxiety is to keep it moving ahead of me. There is nothing more to the dream, no particular purpose in my mind, in my efforts to keep it rolling.

This is the cause. I will not give you the effect.

I was born with a caul and, of course, my parents predicted that I was destained for good luck until a little brother chanced to destroy the caul and left me guessing as to the probability of my good fortune continuing. In time I became a printer—technically what is termed a lineup man, married, had two beautiful children and established a home of my own. And still my remarkable dream haunted me with a devilish persistence that was uncanny. I could not interpret that dream. It preyed so on my mind that it worried me. I imagined it meant all sorts of things. To me it seemed, allegorically, that the huge ball represented obstacles in life. My ease in handling the ball made me think I would overcome all obstructions to my way to success on account of having been born with a caul.

The third phase of the situation just occurred.

While walking along Main Street, Buffalo, N. Y., to which I went on business, I was startled to see an immense iron ball coming out from a store window where it had been on exhibition to advertise the sale of stocks in a submarine diving corporation. The window glass had been removed, a powerful truck stood at the curb and a windlass was pulling the diving ball over the skids to cart it away. Here was the duplicate of my singular dream. What did my accidental meeting with it portend? I felt that something unusual was going to develop, and it did. There was a terrible crash as the skids slipped and broke; the monster ball of iron headed toward me. Instinctively I flung out my hands to fend it off from crushing me under its tons of weight and my fingers encountered an upturned broken skid plank, one end of which was wedged under the ball. There was a fine leverage for us. I pulled down on the plank, the ball rolled back and men hastily wedged it, got new skids under it and it failed to do any serious damage. They hauled it onto the truck and carted it away.

Now I am curious to see if this was the fulfillment of my haunting dream, for if it is, the dream may never return.

S. J. M.

The feature stories that have been published in this magazine are well worth reading. Part of the list is as follows:

LATEST ISSUES.

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29 THE THIRTEENTH DOOR, by Edith Sessions Tupper
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CURRENT NEWS

THIRTEEN LUCKY.

It would be hard to convince Frank Baumblett of Poplar Bluff, Ark., who returned from overseas service, that the number thirteen is unlucky. To begin with, Baumblett enlisted on the thirteenth day of the month, and was assigned to the thirteenth Regiment of Marines. He left the United States on the thirteenth day of the month, was overseas a little over thirteen months, was discharged on the thirteenth and his regiment, the Thirteenth, received their final pay on the thirteenth day of the month. So, all in all, the thirteenth could not be classed as an unlucky number for him.

MINERAL WEALTH IN BRAZIL.

The richest mineral zone of Brazil lies in the heart of the Republic, in the State of Minas Geraes. But throughout the central and northwestern provinces there abounds a wealth of gold, silver, iron, manganese, diamonds and other precious stones. At the present time, however, only a small portion of the valuable beds of mineral is being worked. Doubtless existing unsatisfactory mining laws, as well as lack of fuel and transportation facilities, are responsible for this condition. Practically the only deposits being exploited at the present time are those of manganese situated near the railroads.

The largest of these is the Mina de Morro, which played a prominent part in American industrial life during the war, large quantities of this mineral being required in the manufacture of steel. Over a road ballasted with the valuable manganese ore, the train bearing the visitor climbs to the top of a mountain of manganese, where the actual process of mining is carried out in the open air. This appears to consist of literally nothing else than the digging or dynamiting of a hillside and the carting away of the fragments.

A MISPRINTED BANKNOTE.

Very few mistakes escape the vigilance of the United States in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. One notable exception, however, was a banknote with a $50 value on one side and a $100 value on the other.

The note was discovered by a clerk in a Western hotel, who in making up his accounts for the day, found it impossible to get them to balance. In counting the bills which he had on hand from left to right, laying the bills down on the other side, he was $50 short. After vainly counting over and over, in despair, he called in the manager, who had no better success. At last they examined each bill carefully on both sides, and the cause of the trouble was discovered.

It was found on communicating with Washington that record was held there of the bill and the department was anxious to recall it. With another bill it had been printed for a bank in Kansas, and the mistake had been made in some way by a printer who had turned the sheet upside down in printing the reverse side. The first plate bore the obverse of a $50 bill at the top and of a $100 bill at the bottom, while the other plate held the reverse of both notes. By turning the sheet around for the reverse printing the $50 impression had been made on the back of the $100 bill and the $100 impression on the back of the $50 bill.

DEEP SEA FISHES AT THE SURFACE.

An admirably equipped station for biological research was opened at Messina, Sicily, in December, 1916. In a recently published account of the station, Prof. Loubin calls attention to the extraordinary facilities offered at this place for the study of the deep-sea fauna. The narrow and comparatively shallow Strait of Messina connects two of the deepest basins of the Mediterranean; one in the Tyrrhenian Sea and the other in the Ionian Sea. Four times a day a powerful current flows through the strait, alternating in direction. On meeting the obstruction offered by the abrupt rise of the ocean floor at the strait, the water is forced upward from the deeps and carries with it many forms of life which ordinarily never approach the surface, except when dredged up (usually dead and in a more or less unsatisfactory condition for study) in the course of oceanographic cruises. In the harbor of Messina a small boat and a hand net are all the equipment necessary for capturing live specimens of these curious and little known deep-sea creatures, many of which are provided with light-producing organs and can vary the color of their light at will. No wonder Messina is known as "the paradise of zoologists."

NEW USES FOR MAGNETS.

The availability of magnets as lifting devices has been known, experimentally and practically, for many years. One of the practical uses of a magnet, and to those immediately concerned a highly important use, is that in which it is sometimes employed to withdraw small pieces of iron from such out-of-the-way places as the human eye. Another use of the tractive force of magnetism on a much larger scale was that to which it was put by Edison in his magnetic ore separator, in which the ore, previously crushed to a fine powder, is dropped down a chute past the holes of powerful electro-magnets, in passing which the iron particles of the ore are deflected to one side while the non-magnetic stone dust continues down the chute. Still another instance of the employment of magnetism in a small way is that in which a magnetized tack hammer is used in the manufacture of strawberry baskets on a

large scale in conjunction with a mechanical device which presents the tacks one at a time and head up, to the operative, thereby greatly facilitating his work. It is a far cry from lifting a tack by means of magnetism to the lifting of massive iron and steel plates weighing four, six and twelve tons by this same force, which is now done every workday in a number of large steel works. Electro-magnetism of course is utilized, the form of the magnet being usually rectangular for this work and presenting a flat surface to the plates lifted. The magnets are suspended by chains from cranes and pick up the plates by simple contact and without the loss of time consequent to the adjustment of chain and hooks in the older method.

THE WALLS OF BABYLON.

The Walls of Babylon were built by Nebuchadnezzar. Babylon was an ancient city even in his day, but he greatly enlarged and beautified it. The walls were entirely of baked brick set in bitumen, on every one of which his name was stamped. How vast were these walls is told by Herodotus and many other ancient writers. The city formed a square, fifteen miles on each side. It was surrounded by a moat ten feet deep, full of water. The first wall was double, an outer wall, and an inner wall, each about 24 feet thick and 36 feet apart, the intervening space filled in with dirt. The inner wall was higher than the outer; the exact height is not known, but it was probably at least 160 feet, and was surmounted by towers. Within this wall was a second, also double, and about fifty-five feet wide. It, too, was surmounted by towers, and we can only guess at its height. Other walls, not so thick, but rising even higher, formed circle after circle of defense for the city. Herodotus speaks of the walls being 335 feet high, Ctesias mentions 300 feet, and Dr. Banks says they were probably not far from the truth. The ruins today are forty feet high.

Cyrus captured Babylon without a fight in 538 B. C., by draining the bed of the Euphrates and sending his troops in on the bed of the stream that traversed the city. Darius took the city by stratagem and threw down some of its walls. In 484 B. C. Xerxes completed the demolition, so far as defensive features were concerned. In 275 B. C. the inhabitants were transported to Seleucia; what had been the metropolis of the world became a deserted village, and what remained of its wondrous walls fell into decay.

RULES FOR AIR HIGHWAYS.

So great has been the success of our Government in building up the flying branch of the army that every day when conditions permit the air above the flying fields is thronged with student aviators and their instructors, often as many as fifty at a time. As a protection to life and property rigid traffic rules, based on those of the British Royal Flying Corps, have been adopted. When the war is over and most of these aviators return to civilian life, commercial traffic may become so heavy that state or national police will be needed in crowded aerial thoroughfares.

The greatest danger of accident is found near the surface of the aviation field between machines just rising and those about to land. Those aloft are warned by a red flag when an aircraft is ready to ascend.

The rules of the road for vehicles on the surface apply to two airplanes approaching head-on; they must turn to the right, and see to it that they keep at least 100 yards apart. With both traveling at a speed of 100 miles an hour or more this is a narrow enough margin of safety.

When two are flying in the same direction the leading machine has the right of way. If the one in the rear has speed enough to pass, its pilot must keep 100 yards away if he goes by on the right and 300 if on the left. He is not permited to cut across the bows of the craft ahead. When a flyer sees another approaching from the right on a course that will cross his own he must give way.

No aviator may pass over or under another machine unless a distance of at least 800 feet in altitude separates them, nor may he continue to fly below or above another airplane. The rules prescribe wider margins of safety when airplanes and dirigible balloons meet, as the latter are slower and less easily handled. Unless unavoidable flying over towns and cities is frowned upon.

ABOUT THE CHIMPANZEE.

The chimpanzee does not walk like a man nor does he walk like a quadruped. His gait appears to be a transition between that of quadruped and man. It is significant to observe that when a man walks his arms alternate in motion with his legs. This suggests the way of locomotion of a chimpanzee. Observe infants. Like chimpanzees, babies invariably press most of their weight on the outer edge of the foot and curve the toes inward as if to grasp the surface on which they tread. This tendency is vastly more pronounced in negro than in white infants. The resemblance to the chimpanzee's walk becomes closer as one goes down the scale of humanity. Like a human baby, the chimpanzee is awkward when he attempts to run.

The chimpanzee does not sleep on a perch. He sleeps the same as a human being when possible. He lies down on his back or side and as a rule uses his arms for a pillow. Often he sleeps with his face downward. A little chimpanzee named Moses whom I studied in the jungle demonstrated this fact to me. Moses would be in a tree eating, when he left tired he invariably climbed down to lie on the ground to take his nap. A tree top is no more the normal place for a chimpanzee than the crow's nest on a ship is for a sailor. Apes venture into trees for food or to make their escape and sometimes sleep on platforms built on the limbs. Trees are not their proper abode. I believe that the reason why apes do not build themselves houses is because they live in the tropics. Even animals that have the habit of burrowing in other climates do not appear to do so in the tropics. This is, no doubt, due to the warm climate in which they are in no need of shelter. Moreover, if the chimpanzee built himself a permanent home the natives would soon discover it. Self-preservation tells him to be a nomad. Like the gorilla, he seldom if ever passes two nights in the same place.

Their average life appears to be more uniform than that of man. Most of them probably do not live to be

much over twenty years of age. There have been a few cases where apes lived to be possibly forty. The boy ape becomes a man from eight to ten years, the female maturing about two years younger.

ANCESTORS OF THE MODERN BANK.

In the thirteenth century dealers in foreign money of Venice, a city doing a large business with other countries, began to accept money on deposit, thus becoming private bankers. From this dates the history of modern financial institutions. In 1318 the Venetian Government passed laws for the protection of depositors, and in 1583 established the first public bank in Europe, the Banco de Rialto. Other famous institutions founded before this country was discovered were the Bank of St. George of Genoa and the Bank of Barcelona.

These were followed by the Bank of Amsterdam in 1609, long the greatest in Europe, and the Bank of Hamburg, founded ten years later. Of the state institutions the Biksbank (the Bank of Sweden) was the first, dating from 1656, and is still in existence.

The Bank of England came into existence in 1694, with Sir John Houblon as governor and a staff of fifty-four, the yearly payroll amounting to $21,750. It has always acted as banker for the Government, pays the interest on the national bonds and still occupies a building the first stone of which was laid in 1782. Napoleon founded the Bank of France in 1800, while the Imperial Bank of Germany (the Reichsbank) is comparatively youthful, dating from 1875.

As early as 1686 a company doing a limited banking business was organized in Massachusetts Bay Colony, but Colonial banks had a checkered history. Banking history in the United States begins with the Bank of Pennsylvania, organized in Philadelphia in 1780 to supply food to the Continental Army. Two years later Congress authorized Robert Morris to found the Bank of North America, which for years rendered great aid to the Government. It operated under a charter from Pennsylvania until 1868, when it became a national bank.

It was succeeded by the First Bank of the United States, organized by Alexander Hamilton.

The national banking system was created during the Civil War to aid in disposing of the great issues of Government bonds. It was improved but was never elastic enough to meet great and sudden demands. Fortunately, the Federal Reserve system was established before the outbreak of the present war, putting our finances for the first time on a sound and scientific basis.

TAMING OF THE LION.

The tamer of wild beasts uses no secret methods or magic spells. In fact, such a tamer proceeds very much as a child would in taming a wild kitten. If a lion is to be taught to ride on horseback for instance, it is necessary to be very patient at first and take a great deal of time. If possible, it is best to begin when the beast is young—less than a year old. He was born in captivity; he is always accustomed to seeing persons outside his cage, but not inside. All his instincts are fierce.

When the trainer first opens the cage door and steps inside the youngster at once displays fear. He will probably jump at the trainer, snarling savagely, for that is his way of showing alarm. The only course that can be pursued is to beat him off with a light club, for the first lesson for him to learn is that it is not safe for him to attack men.

The trainer does not follow him, but sits quietly down on a box or a chair inside the cage, paying no particular attention to the beast. He sits there for an hour or two—sometimes three hours—at a stretch. This is done to accustom the lion to the presence of a man in its cage and to wear out the beast's natural fear and fierceness. This first lesson is repeated on the following day, and is continued for a month.

Next the trainer takes a piece of meat into the cage and, waiting until the lion is hungry, offers it on the end of a long stick. Very likely the lion will not touch it at first, perhaps not for many days; or, if he seizes it, his manner will not be such as to indicate thankfulness. But by patience and perseverance he will be induced by and by to come and take his food from the stick and eventually from the trainers' hand. Not infrequently he will try to bite the hand that offers the meat, but, generally speaking, it is deemed a decided victory when a young lion will voluntarily approach and take his food from the keeper's hand.

Soon after this he will allow the trainer to stroke his head. Toward a stranger he may exhibit nearly, or quite as much ferocity as at first.

The next step is to put a chain around the young fellow's neck and lead him about the cage and most trainers deem it necessary to bind a lion down to the bottom of the cage once or twice to instil into his naturally intractable mind the fact that human bonds are irresistible and that chains cannot be broken.

The various feats constituting a performing lion's education are afterward taken up one by one, and taught gradually. The only secrets that the lion-tamer knows are endless patience and oft-repeated lessons. Needless cruelty is always avoided; nevertheless, it is necessary that lions, as well as tigers, leopards and most other wild beasts, should be in fear of their keeper.

There is almost or quite as much difference in young lions as in boys. Some are much more docile and intelligent than others. Some develop good and trustworthy traits; others prove refractory and can never be fully trusted.—N. Y. Herald.

THREE HUNDRED INVENTIONS TO CREDIT OF ONCE POOR COBBLER.

The majority of inventors become famous through one great discovery or invention. We almost invariably link their names with one real benefit conferred upon their fellow men. Thus we associate Morse with the telegraph, Bell with the telephone, Marconi and wireless telegraphy, Stephenson with the steam engine, and Elias Howe with the humble but industry-revolutionizing sewing machine. These are the results by which we know them; but, in nearly all cases, men have not happened upon a single happy discovery and stopped there—far from it!

An inventor has a bent for investigation, for taking things apart and putting them together in attempted improvement, until, finally, something "goes" and a

new invention is ready to be perfected, recorded, and placed on the market. Sometimes a man who has spent months of labor upon his model tries to take out a patent, only to find that someone else has been at work along the same line; and that his discovery, although new to him, is not unknown in a patent office. Then he must swallow his disappointment as best he can and try out another scheme. For an inventor can no more cease striving to invent something than can a scholar keep away from the books he loves, or a sailor from the sea.

Thomas Edison stands out as a shining example of a man of many inventions. One would hesitate to say how many different things he has on record to his credit, or what a debt of gratitude the world owes him for several epoch-making inventions which he has produced, after years of painstaking labor, and placed on the market.

Until recently, there lived in a New England city an industrious citizen, a Canadian by birth, who might almost rival Edison in the number of patents which he obtained in his long lifetime, though not in the fame which he gained from useful inventions. His name was Louis Goddu, and for many years his home was in Winchester, Massachusetts. Back in the early sixties, at the time of the Civil War, he was employed as a cobbler in Boston, at a period when much of the work of making shoes was still done by hand, and was, consequently, a laborious process. Mr. Goddu did not work with his hands alone as he pegged away he was experimenting with machines for pegging shoes, for sewing them with wire, and for putting in the metal eyelets, all much faster than it could possibly be done by hand. Gradually the number of his inventions along this line grew, until the list of patents granted him was said to cover nearly every operation in the manufacture of shoes, and these same machines are quite generally used, in an improved form today.

In all, some 300 inventions were the result of Mr. Goddu's work, most of them being designed to perfect the process of shoemaking. He was not, however, a man of only one idea, as is proved by the interesting results he achieved in other directions. Among other things he invented a burner which should use petroleum for fuel, and a machine for producing wire nails, which was awarded a gold medal at a Chicago exposition. He received patents on turrets such as are used on battleships, and for improvements in street cars. His model for the Brooklyn bridge, which was erected many years ago, was widely and favorably noticed.

Whenever you pick up a current number of some wire-bound magazine and note how easily and comfortably it lies open in your hand, you may like to recall that you are indebted to Mr. Goddu for the invention of the newer way of binding books and pamphlets by wire staples so that the pages open flat, without breaking apart.

It is pleasant to know that the genius of this 300-invention man—who was thrown on his own resources as a lad of 14, to make his sturdy, self-reliant way in the world—was recognized not only in the United States, the country of his adoption, but in foreign lands as well. Various medals and honors were conferred on him by royalty abroad, in addition to those which he received at home; and, in the shoe manufacturing business especially he will long be remembered as the "300-invention man."

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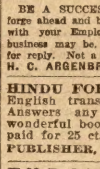

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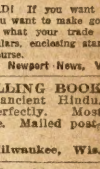

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References: Third National Bank, Sedalia, Mo.

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